Havelock Ellis.

Louis Hickens
Aug 4, 1936.

HAVELOCK
ELLIS

Other Books by Isaac Goldberg:

STUDIES IN SPANISH-AMERICAN LITERATURE, 1920

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THE DRAMA OF TRANSITION, 1922

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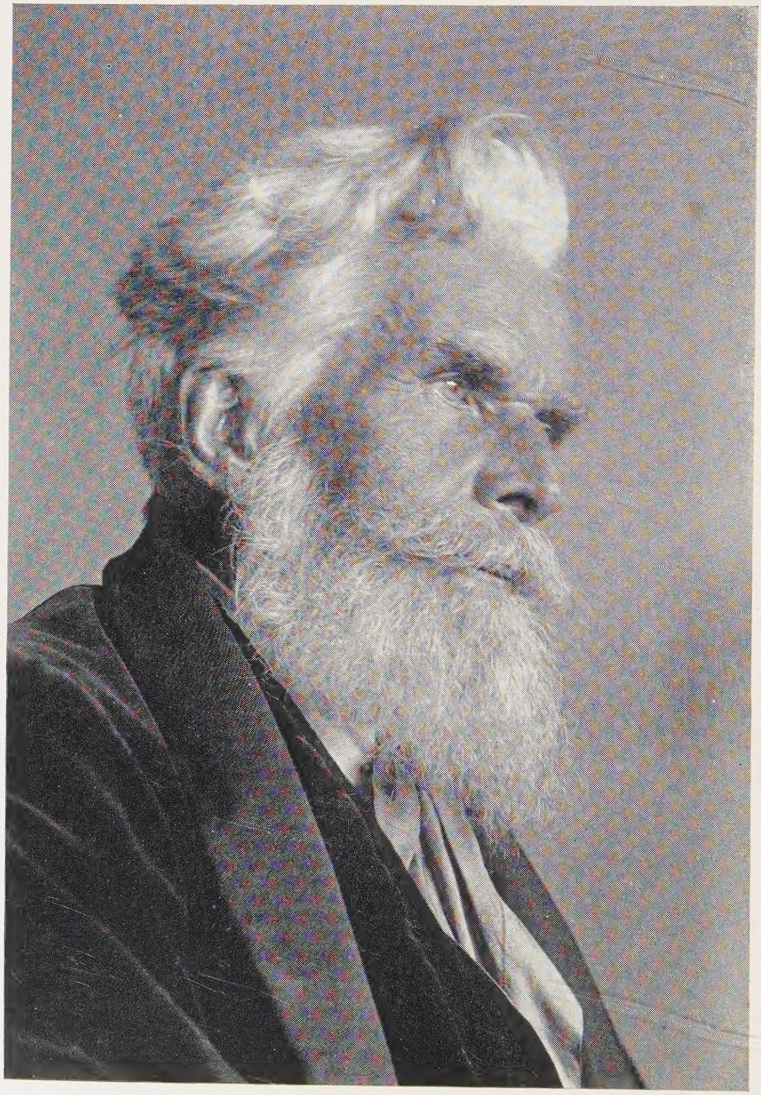

ELLIS IN 1923

HAVELOCK ELLIS

A BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL SURVEY

by Isaac Goldberg

WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER
ON MRS. EDITH ELLIS

Illustrated & Documented

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To

H. L. MENCKEN

FELLOW WANDERER IN THESE "ELLISIAN" FIELDS

"To live remains an art which everyone must learn, and which no one can teach."

HAVELOCK ELLIS

Preface

"*EVERY ARTIST,*" *wrote Ellis in his first published book,* The New Spirit, "*writes his own autobiography. Even Shakespeare's works contain a life of himself for those who know how to read it.*" *Proceeding to the discussion of Tolstoi, Mr. Ellis points out that* "*it is seldom necessary to consult any other authority for the essential facts of his life and growth. . . . Tolstoi uses his material as an artist, but the material is himself.*" *This, precisely, is the spirit in which I have approached the life and labors of the man who wrote those lines. Ellis, from the first, has used his material as an artist, and that material has been, as it continues to be, himself.*

In this book, then, as in its predecessor, The Man Mencken, *I have not attempted to write a conventional biography or a conventional critique. My interest, as always, has been only secondarily in book and document; first of all, and last, comes the warm red blood of which printer's ink is but the cold symbol. So, too, I have left* "*moral*" *judgments to Rhadamanthus and his humorless brood of descendants, each of whom rules over his private hell. I have tried, on the other hand, to compose an aesthetic portrait, — aesthetic, not in the finical, affected sense that the word tends, unfortunately, to regain, but in that broader and deeper significance which opposes to the bloodless impersonality of moral dogma the sane anarchy of personal taste.*

It seems appropriate that the first book upon Havelock Ellis should appear in the United States; for it is in

Germany and in America, rather than in his native England, that Ellis has been appreciated at anything like his true worth. It is in the United States, moreover, that his wife, during the whirlwind tour some two years before her death, found a readier welcome than Great Britain had ever given. Here, too, since the February issue of 1923, the Birth Control Review, *edited by Margaret Sanger, has devoted the second number of each year chiefly to celebrating the birthday of the man who has done so much for womankind.*

It is an irony equally appropriate that this book about an Englishman of purest stock should be written by an American Jew who was born in Boston, once the exclusive stronghold of the Puritans; in Boston, within sight of the historic Charles River as it flows between that city and Cambridge — once John Harvard's Cambridge — onward toward Charlestown and the harbor, under railroad trestles that cast dark reflections in the lazy, murky stream. Today the banks of the languid Charles, at this selfsame point, are flanked on the Boston side by a park and a boulevard; on the Cambridge side, by the new buildings of the Institute of Technology and by factories. At night, on the Boston shore, the sky is lit by the necklace of electric bulbs that glitters from the golden dome of the State House on Beacon Hill; the Cambridge sky, in electrical antiphony, answers with a sign that advertises Carter's Inks. . . . The river itself, never impetuous, has been further tamed on its course to Boston Harbor. A dam, controlled by a lock, maintains the water at a uniform height, free from the fluctuations of the ocean tide. This is not the Charles of Emerson's day, nor of Long-

fellow's, — not even of Santayana's. Symbol of the cities between which it flows! Dammed, bereft of ebb and flow, river no longer, but a vast, stagnant pool.

As a child, I was rescued from drowning in its waters; as a youth, for five years I crossed the vanished West Boston wooden bridge on my way to Harvard. Here, too, was a stream of learning, dammed at times against the living flux of the sea. Outside the campus gates a new world was knocking, — the world of Ibsen and Nietzsche, of Wells and Shaw, and, for a few, the world of Havelock Ellis. The very names reeked with the odor of forbidden fruit, which grows ever in Paradise, and does not always melt to ashes in the mouth.

So it was that for some of us Ellis, who had barely known a university, became a strangely unprofessorial professor of the spirit. He kept the streams of independent thinking freely flowing, or broke the dam of our intellectual and emotional life, letting us course onward, each over his own river-bed to the sea, where there is room for all the streams of earth. Earth, under which is room for everything.

He has written that true leaders must turn their backs upon those they lead. More: he has taught us to turn our backs upon our leaders — to lead ourselves. Today a new era dawns for him who has discovered the elixir of youth not in a Florida mirage, but in the fountain of our blood. He belongs with the great sanative influences of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In its first form this book appeared as one of the blue books of the series published by the Haldeman-Julius

Company of Girard, Kansas. It has been, of course, extensively revised and expanded from its original length of some fourteen thousand words. I have also incorporated material that has appeared in the columns of the Boston Evening Transcript, *the* Literary Digest International Book Review, *the* Forum, *the* Guardian, *the* Birth Control Review *and the* Stratford Monthly.

For various favors incidental to the writing of the book I am grateful to Miss Louie Ellis, sister of the writer; to George Bedborough, early involved in the legal prosecution that befell Ellis's studies in sex; to Margaret Sanger, editor of the Birth Control Review; *to the English painter, Miss Mary McCrossan; to Dr. I. H. Coriat, ex-President of the American Psychoanalytic Association and member of the International Committee on Education in Psychoanalysis; to Albert Mordell, author of the* Literature of Ecstasy *and diligent editor of scattered Hearniana; to Joseph Ishill, of Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, publisher of posthumous essays and stories by Mrs. Ellis and printer in the tradition of William Morris; to Mr. and Mrs. Somervell and Richard L. Simon, for conveying valuable material from London; to my wife, for compiling the Index; and, not least, to Mr. Havelock Ellis for yielding patiently, if but reluctantly, to my barbarous incursions upon his modesty and reticence.*

ISAAC GOLDBERG

ROXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS.

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HAVELOCK
ELLIS

CHAPTER ONE

A Flat in Brixton — Two Photographs

I

A WIDE SHELF of widely ranging books, all from the same pen. On the wall above the shelf, two photographs of the author, signed in a firm, free hand. There are lean books and stout; learned ones and simple; books on the countries of the world and on the kingdoms of the heart and of the mind. There are formidable tomes whose leaves have fallen from the tree of forbidden fruit; there are modest slips of books that suggest the poetry and romance of an Adam and Eve who are strangers to the serpent. Who is the Prospero that has set these spirits free?

With the sturdy, yet supple rhythm of his periods still in one's ears, one conjures up an image of the man and of his habitat. A page of the studies in sex falls across the memory and suggests the vision of a dark, even a gruesome laboratory, — a clinic in emotions, with a ray of hope in the far distance lighting dimly the way to possible escape. A poem is suddenly remembered, and here is Arcady in Australia. The eye lights upon a sizable volume and is filled with Spanish sunshine. Beside it, almost so thin as to elude notice, is a solitary fiction that is perfumed with youth and the free open. Surely

the man who has built so many mansions of the spirit dwells in the undying affection of his fellows, in an earthly mansion as stately as those he has reared.

Undying affection he has won, and a mansion, too; of his own kind, however. Most of his fellows early mistook this Prospero for a Caliban; they reviled him; they looked upon his magic wand and saw only what their sight could see, — a flaunting phallus. They consigned him to oblivion, and he forthwith forgot them, proceeding on his appointed task. Now they are remembered only because they wished him to be forgotten. Decades of neglect not only have not embittered him; they have given him the desired solitude in which he might spin his sweetness and his light. There are echoes of the days of 1898. Even in the twentieth century a commentator may scribble, in the London *Mercury*, that " Mr. Ellis as himself says of Swift has a tendency to dwell upon excrement." And this, of the *Impressions & Comments*, 2nd Series. Put a pig in a palace, said Remy de Gourmont, and he'll make a sty of it. No. Even today, the affection in which Mr. Ellis dwells is a quality, not a quantity. To match the uncomprehending hostility that has done him honor he has won, from a civilized few, an admiration that often amounts to reverence freely-confessed. To both he responds with unaffected simplicity; in the first case, with understanding pity, for he knows that they know not what they do. By a common irony, they are the selfsame souls who would profit most by a study of his labors; that is, if anything could profit them.

And his earthly mansion? It is a flat in Brixton, London, suburb of the music-hall artists, as Hampstead is of

Photograph Taken in Brixton Apartment, About 1912

Edward Peppen Ellis

Susannah Wheatley (Mrs. E. P.) Ellis

The Parents of Havelock Ellis

the literati and Chelsea of the painters. "A dreary outskirt of London," Hugh de Sélincourt has called it; hardly the suitable setting for this Prospero's cave. "While I was ascending the worn stone steps of the staircase, shyness at meeting the man and rage at his surroundings set me in confusion. I could not see an inch beneath the dirty surface of things. The monstrous absurdity of modern life glared at me." [1] This is the common experience of all who seek the man out, picturing in their thoughts a home of material luxuries, presided over by an intellectual sybarite. In Ellis, however, is nothing of the sybarite, nor has luxury ever figured in his life. His books have been written in shacks, on beaches, on hillsides over abandoned Cornish mines, always amidst the life that engendered them. What is more, they have been written, not typewritten. Something in the man seeks simplicity, directness, even a certain arduousness. Prospero's cave in Brixton is much of a monk's cell, a hermit's retreat to which the world has beaten a narrow, but well-worn path.

Here Ellis, when in London, lives a solitary and self-dependent life. It is not one — as has unpleasantly been rumored — of destitution. It is the life that Ellis prefers while in London; the greater part of the year he spends elsewhere. Thus, in his flat in Dover Mansions there is not even a domestic to cook the meals or a charwoman to make the fire. If the man feels pride, it is, one imagines, not in his solid contribution to the arts and sciences of beautiful living, but in this self-sufficiency, in his prowess,

[1] See, in *The Birth Control Review* for February, 1923, the article "Havelock Ellis," by Hugh de Sélincourt.

as Mr. Sélincourt has put it, "in laying a fire with fewer sticks and less paper and a better result than any expert charwoman." Ellis has said, indeed, that he "would rather win praise for the making of a salad than for the writing of an essay." He has achieved both distinctions. He is as skilled in the secrets of the cuisine as in the lore of the library; he can prepare a full-course dinner with the same hands that wrote *The Dance of Life*. In this there is, by the way, no affectation. As a young man, Ellis suffered from digestive troubles; at Sparkes Creek, Australia, he was also early thrown on his own resources. To this is due his more personal interest in problems of diet. It is quite like him, too, that in his case the solution of the problem should have so practical an outcome.

Those who have met him in recent years have been impressed first of all by his height and his thinness, and then by the ethereal expression of his eyes. "If Havelock Ellis were any taller," one woman admirer has written, "he'd reach heaven, where most of his friends reside when they are in his company. If he were any thinner, he would be invisible." [1] As a matter of statistics, though he is ordinarily set down as a six-footer, his height is 5 ft., 10.5 inches. His weight averages about 155 pounds. Until his fortieth year his hair, which has always been thick, was a dark brown; then it began to turn grey. More than one who has met him will assure you that his eyes are blue or grey; in reality they are green. He is, by heredity, English in a very strict sense, yet he has often been regarded as belonging to some other nation-

[1] See, in *The Birth Control Review* for February, 1925, the article "Havelock Ellis," by Jane Burr.

ality. In Paris, for example, he has been taken for Russian or Flemish. "*Monsieur est russe? flamand?*" asked a hotel-keeper. "*Non,*" corrected the lady of the hostelry at last, "*anglais!*" Strangely enough, even Russians in England have considered him a Russian; others have thought him to be a Spaniard. Because he looks like a sailor — and, in view of his ancestry, this should hardly be surprising, — he was asked only the other day whether he had Norse blood. There is about him, undoubtedly, the air of a Viking. It is symbolically and poetically just that he who is so narrowly English in hereditary strain and who, despite such a source, has wandered far over the earth in body and spirit, until the world rather than any country is his true home, should bear upon his features the mark of this universal, spiritual citizenship.

That simple, almost ascetic flat in Brixton is the center of a circle whose circumference literally reaches to the periphery of the world. From every continent, from half-forgotten corners of the earth, come letters and books, queries and replies, each of which receives its due attention. This man's life, like his art, is no mere escape from existence, but a deeper penetration into it. For all his Whitmanian embrace of humanity, he has chosen to dwell apart from the hurly-burly; yet this, too, is not so much exclusiveness as reclusiveness. Like the later Prospero of Hauptmann's *Indipohdi* he well might say:

> Leave me to pass my days in solitude.
> Removed from life, I am to life the nearer.

The clatter of public dinners knows him not; his wardrobe does not include a dress suit; the rostrum and the

public platform have not resounded to his oratory. The mood and the manner of the publicist are alike foreign to his nature. There is an utter absence of pomp and ceremony. No man has less sought others; no man is more easily approachable.

Mrs. Edith Ellis, wife of the writer, and herself a writer of no little charm and substance, must have felt the disparity between the image conjured up by her husband's admirers and the reality as she knew it, for she begins a study of him with a striking contrast.

> There are some personalities one always sees in imagination in certain surroundings which have been created by some great painter. For instance there is a type of woman one associates with Mona Lisa or St. Ursula. There are some men one instinctively sees in imagination in a group of Bacchanalian revels and others again, as John the Baptist, excitedly demanding a new social order as a sequence of sincere repentance. A series of pictures Havelock Ellis instinctively loves is that of St. Jerome in his study. In them he has unconsciously seen an image of the student within himself. In that little cell open to the air and the sun, the peaceful philosopher ponders over the great secrets in nature and in books. A tame lion lies at St. Jerome's feet, just as a fox and a snake in the wilds of Cornwall have remained at Havelock Ellis's side unafraid of one so absorbed in simplest expression.

Perhaps Ellis's reclusiveness is related to the shyness of his early youth, in which, as we shall see, his great contribution to sexual psychology may also be partially sourced. It has always drawn comment from his closest friends. Speaking here of this trait, Mrs. Ellis goes on:

Edward Carpenter once laughingly said of him that he reminded him of a snail cautiously peeping from his shell, and a social sound or a rough touch sends him immediately out of sight into his own world of observation into which no one dare intrude. Olive Schreiner, again, described him as between a Christ and a faun; his aloofness from and yet nearness to human beings make this image true. . . . Those who know Havelock Ellis best realize that the sensitiveness and tenderness and deep intuitions of a woman, added to the virile intellectualism of a man, with glimmerings of the fantastic fear and also the wisdom of a child, dip and dodge in all his life-work around problems which are so deep, subtle and many-sided that most of us shrink from approaching them at all.

Few bookmen are less "bookish" than this human library. In his scientific labors, of course, he has made constant use of the works of other investigators, collating them with his own researches, and regarding these books as so many necessary tools. Yet he has always had an aversion for a large personal library and has never, until recently, owned many volumes. If we except the necessarily copious notes to his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, we find that even his books are free of pedantic display and of the dust that settles in cloistered walls. Whenever it is possible, he works away from books, in the open air. Something of the freshness of wind and water has blown and flowed through his prose, winnowing it of stylistic superfluities until it has become the mirror of crystalline thinking.

Mrs. Ellis has related, in the same short but excellent article upon her husband, a comical anecdote that reflects

an ingenuous attitude toward his works.[1] It was in their little Cornish village, and a casual tourist had pointed out the couple and asked who they were.

"'Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, my dear,' said our neighbor who was weeding her garden, 'they'm both writers.'

"'Oh!' said the tourist, who later became one of our friends, 'and what do they write?'

"The old neighbor leaned over the wall, trowel in hand, and said in a whisper: 'He do write out of other people's books, but she do write them out of her own head-piece.'"

In a sense that is almost literal, Ellis himself is the best book that he has written. The riches with which his admirers surround him in their visions of the man and his habitat contain, too, an element of inner reality; for they objectify the wealth of life that he has created in his books and in his own living.

II

On the wall above the shelf, two photographs of the author. They were taken in August, 1923, and neither is very well known in the United States. The picture which has been made most popular by the reviews is a profile view that hardly suggests the infinite power and pity of the man. Power and pity — these, surely, are the salient attributes of the pictures on my wall. The one, a profile

[1] The article may be found in *The Bookman* for July, 1918, printed some twenty-two months after her death. It is also to be had in the privately printed *Stories and Essays by Mrs. Havelock Ellis*, issued by Mr. Joseph Ishill, The Free Spirit Press, Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, 1924, in a two volume edition limited to 305 sets.

of the right side of the face, quite distinct from that to which I have just referred, is all power — power of mind, power of body. The eyes are eagle-keen; the nose, long and sharp, seems made for a companion keenness of scent and for deep, invigorating inhalations. Grey hair crowns a massive forehead; hair that suggests age only by its color, for it flows in youthful exuberance and in youthful curves. There is a glint of humor in the eyes (can there be real power without humor?); they are eyes with a pagan slant, through which — as some of his friends insist — a Pan or a Satyr peers. In the wide, full lips is a hint of sensuousness; even the ear is fashioned upon this generous scale, admirably adapted to catch the finest vibrations of the inner and the outer worlds.

In the second photograph, almost a full view of the striking face, all these firm harmonies are softened. The humor and the keenness of the eyes are immersed in contemplation. A flowing moustache over a rounded beard that suggests the savant rather than the patriarch, — these conceal the problematic chin. The cheeks are fretted with lines of care. Here, written large over every feature, is pity for a world that he could scorn as well. It is not so much power that abdicates to conquest, as power relaxed. This pity, literally, is the other face of power.

I do not believe I deceive myself when I behold in these two photographs the tokens of an ambivalence that is inscribed as large upon Ellis's pages as upon his features. It is not, I am equally sure, a lapse into the allurements of rhetoric that discovers in that ambivalence a symbol of Ellis's life. Always it is the same face that mirrors these fluctuations of the soul; just as, in the many writ-

ings of this citizen of the world, the broad vision of the seer beholds a living unity where others have been able to find but writhing fragments.

Here is an equanimity not stillborn of indifference, but hard-won out of struggle and understanding. Here is a beyond-good-and-evil that has passed through both good and evil and lifted them from the morass of narrow "morals" into the clear light and tonic air of aesthetic contemplation. Knowledge has aged him, but wisdom keeps him young. I wonder, indeed, whether any writer now living wrote, as a youngster, more oldly, or as an oldster more youthfully and resiliently. It is to be regretted that Rodó, the Uruguayan essayist of "Ariel" (which became the intellectual breviary of South American youth) did not know Ellis as Ellis knew him. For, while this classic, almost too lofty spirit invoked an Ariel to resist the Caliban of the North that was growing to maturity in the United States, farther north still, in England, was an Ariel writing in the tongue of Shakespeare. It was a fitting part of the irony of things that Rodó's Ariel should come from the race of Saxons that he feared, — the race that had given him his symbols. Ellis is a glorious fulfillment that Rodó but glimpsed. He is the circle of which Rodó saw only an arc. He is the living Ariel — eternal youth in the realms of thought.

Here are eyes, keen and humorous, blessed with virginal sight. Every day, in the words of the poet, he is born anew. Not only does he sum up a civilization; he transcends it. He has seen things steadily, and seen them as wandering parts which he has rebuilt into a whole. Here, I believe, is the primary importance of the man to

his age and to all ages. He has traveled many roads, yet all have led to mankind. He has not been blinded to the forest by the wood; he has seen both trees and forest.

Mencken's tribute to the man has justly circled the English-speaking realm: [1]

> If the test of the personal culture of a man be the degree of freedom from the banal ideas and childish emotions which move the great masses of men, then Havelock Ellis is undoubtedly the most civilized Englishman of his generation.
>
> He is a man of the soundest and widest learning, but it is not his positive learning that gives him distinction; it is his profound and implacable skepticism, his penetrating eye for the transient, the disingenuous and the shoddy. So unconditioned a skepticism, it must be plain, is not an English habit. The average Englishman of science, though he may challenge the Continentals within his speciality, is only too apt to sink to the level of a politician, a green grocer, or a suburban clergyman outside it. The examples of Wallace, Crookes and Lodge are anything but isolated. Scratch an English naturalist and you are likely to discover a spiritualist; take an English metaphysician to where the band is playing, and if he begins to snuffle patriotically you need not be surprised. The late war uncovered this weakness in a wholesale manner. . . .
>
> Ellis, it seems to me, stood above all the rest, and precisely because his dissent from the prevailing imbecilities was quite devoid of emotion and had nothing in it of brummagem moral purpose. . . . Ellis kept his head throughout. An Englishman of the oldest native stock, an unapologetic lover of English scenes and English ways, an unshaken believer in the essential soundness and high historical destiny of his people, he simply stood aside from the current clown-show and waited in patience

[1] See *Prejudices*, Third Series, Page 189 *ff*. New York, Alfred A. Knopf. 1922.

for sense and decency to be restored. . . . There is something almost of Renaissance dignity in his chronicle of his speculations. The man that emerges is not a mere scholar immured in a cell, but a man of the world superior to his race and his time — a philosopher viewing the childish passion of lesser men disdainfully and yet not too remote to understand it, and even to see in it a certain cosmic use. . . . He is the complete anti-Kipling. In him the Huxleian tradition comes to full flower. . . . His style . . . takes on a sort of glowing clarity. It is English that is as transparent as a crystal, and yet it is English that is full of fine colors and cadences. There could be no better investiture for the questionings and conclusions of so original, so curious, so learned, and, above all, so sound and hearty a man.

This comment is all the more remarkable in that it comes from a man who, abstract philosophy and general outlook apart, is in more than one way the antithesis of the Englishman whom he so generously and so accurately appraises.[1] "Undoubtedly the most civilized Englishman of his generation." A great compliment, indeed — to England and to civilization. For Ellis, quite alone on his heights, dwells in a day that neither England nor civilization yet has dreamed.

My eyes wander back to the second of these photographs, and strangely enough, at one moment I imagine that a less unkempt Walt Whitman is meditating upon space; at another, that a less distracted Tolstoi sits brooding upon an ancient earth. Ellis has often been mistaken for Bernard Shaw; his face has, with less warrant, even been likened to that of Carlyle, and with more plausibil-

[1] "Ellis," wrote Mr. Mencken to me (October 11, 1924), some years after this appraisal, "is a very curious fellow. It is almost impossible to imagine England producing him."

ity, to the patriarchal visage of Rabindranath Tagore.) There is something of the American, something of the Russian, in the man as in his face, — a something more than tempered by his own temperament. Far more critical, by nature, than the good grey poet or the author of "What Is Art?" Ellis suggests, to use a distinction of his own, the artist of contemplation rather than of creation. Yet this is no merely passive artistry; rather is it such an unseen intensity of vibration as produces light.

The man who has beheld life as a harmony of arts is himself an artist of life. That harmony which he has discerned he has achieved. That light which he generates he sheds. In his reclusion there must be many moments of intense disgust with the human brood, as there must be others of a humility that only the true scholar may feel. Yet he knows that, if whatever is may not on that account be necessarily right, yet it *is*, and must provide the foundation for what may be; that heaven is nearer to the earth than to the clouds; that nothing human is unimportant; that man's way to happiness lies, not in an incurious conformity, but in a significant self-differentiation.

And this is the man who, upon presenting the first fruits of his monumental labors to his native England, was branded by officialdom as — a purveyor of filth! He, whose life has brought to man and woman true cleanliness of mind and body, — a cleanliness, in any valid sense, next to a godliness that the preachers only prate about and that only such ungodly as he may vision.

CHAPTER TWO

Ancestral Personalities and Influences

I

THOUGH the Ellis family has long been in the possession of numerous documents dealing with its ancestry, it does not appear to have done much investigation into its origin. Ellis himself, in fact, seems to have shared this indifference; he had always known the history of the family through the nineteenth century, resting content with this knowledge until after his fortieth year. The result of his researches is as interesting as surprising. Not only does he stand revealed as an Englishman in the very narrowest sense of the term, tracing his ancestry back along various lines to the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries, and even earlier, but these ascendants seem to synthetize and to symbolize in their own occupations the career of the investigator.

With a single, remote exception, there is no definite indication of Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Cornish or Continental ancestors. On both his paternal and maternal sides Ellis has a great-grandmother who was a Peppen; they were sisters. The name Peppen is the same as Pepyn or Pepin, found in northern France and Flanders; it has been preserved in the family, as the middle name of Ellis's father. Just when the Peppens crossed from the Continent is not known; they are to be found, however, on the Suffolk coast, early in the sixteenth century, and there they re-

Mr. Wheatley, Havelock Ellis's Maternal Grandfather, from a Miniature

Mrs. Wheatley, Havelock Ellis's Maternal Grandmother, from a Miniature

Mr. Ellis, Havelock Ellis's Paternal Grandfather

Mrs. Ellis, Havelock Ellis's Paternal Grandmother

mained until the end of the eighteenth century, when they died out in the male line. With rare exceptions they followed the Church from father to son, and Ellis has traced some of their characteristics in himself. His paternal grandfather, for example, was said to look like a Frenchman. The resemblance may have been, of course, a chance one; it may well be due, on the other hand, to the very remote hereditary strain that Ellis has in double measure. Ellis himself, as we have seen, has been taken more than once for anything but an Englishman of purest lineage. The narrowness — genealogically speaking — of Ellis's English heritage is further restricted by another important qualification: he is an Englishman, not of the land, but of the sea.

His father, Edward Peppen Ellis, was himself born in 1827 of a father who devoted his life to officialdom in the London Docks, occupying a solid and comfortable house on the Wapping Pier Head; all the sons were in the Docks, too, except Edward. In his youth considered the flower of the flock, he chose to go to sea, and the sea he followed for fifty years. None of your modern steamships for him; he was a sailor, as his son proudly avers, who really sailed; he captained the vessel of the good old tradition. He was a simple, lovable, genial personality, retaining almost to the end a vigorous health. "I have had a good innings," he said to his son Havelock when, in 1914, he felt that his life's voyage was drawing to a close. A good innings, indeed; dying, at 87, he was far more concerned for the sufferings in the trenches than for his own spent self.[1]

[1] In his old age Captain Ellis wrote, for his family, an autobiographi-

Ellis's mother, née Susanna Mary Wheatley, was the daughter of a sea-captain who had given up the sea at the earnest solicitation of his wife. He had a romantic career. Early in his life his ship had been captured by the French, and he had known for some time what the inside of a French prison looked like. Long enough, indeed, to have acquired an adequate knowledge of the tongue. It was evidently his good looks that won him his freedom, for a certain French girl, Annette, captivated by his very fair complexion and his handsome youth, helped him to escape. His father had been a prosperous shipbuilder at Sunderland, which was then an important shipping center; many of the Wheatleys, at that time and earlier, naturally adopted the sea. They were a large, fair and handsome race, Scandinavian in type, as might be expected, for the Durham coast is open to the north, and the Danish element there is strong. In this sailor family were many soldiers, too. The only brother of Ellis's mother had set forth on his first voyage and never was heard of more. "Never marry a sailor!" old Wheatley would say to his daughter. Yet that was just what she did, rejecting all other suitors. She might, at the time, have taken for her motto one of the Spanish folk songs that Ellis has translated in his book *Sonnets with Folk Songs from the Spanish:*

My father was a sailor
My brother a sailor was he,
And the man who would be my lover
A sailor must he be.

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cal narrative of his life and voyages. This is now in the possession of Miss C. Fox Smith, an authority on old sailing ships.

Ellis's parents were persons of singularly beautiful character; his debt to them is immense. They could hardly be said, however, to possess intellectual instincts. The sea-captain's only reading in poetry was Pope; the mother, who adhered to the Evangelical school of the English church — though always disposed to be tolerant and considerate towards those who thought differently — brought up her boy as a devout Christian. The wisdom of this couple, then, was such as is learned of experience rather than out of books. Intellectually, but intellectually only, Ellis is far more the child of his father's father and his mother's mother, neither of whom he ever knew.

II

His paternal grandfather seems to have reacted from a large family, and from a wife who could not rise far above the numerous demands made upon her by this excessive domesticity, in the direction of a wide scientific and intellectual curiosity; he had a slight taste for art, too, and was of an inventive mind. Like the Ellises generally, he had some taste for music and played the flute. His father played the organ, and his sailor son, Edward, sang, and at one time kept a concertina in his cabin for use when other music failed. Ellis's maternal grandmother may have had an even greater influence upon him. She was born into the social circles of Bury St. Edmonds, not a large provincial town, but at the time a place of wit and fashion, a really remarkable intellectual center, in which women were specially prominent, as they have always been in Suffolk generally.[1] The only girl of a large

[1] See Ellis's *A Study of British Genius.*

family, she was adored by her brothers. She had a large and successful girls' school in a beautiful old home just outside of London; it was only recently destroyed. Marrying when she was well over thirty, she continued her educational activities until her death some years later. Fond of books, she had a real intellectual taste; her library included not merely the English and French titles of the curriculum, but works from both these literatures chosen with personal independence. It was in these books, handed down through his parents, that Ellis as a boy discovered new worlds. Some, with her book plate in them, he still cherishes, notably Rowlandson's *Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque,* which has been a joy since childhood. About this lady there was nothing of the schoolmarm; of great charm and vivacity, she mingled in society, was fond of dress, and even was something of a woman of fashion. She was also a friend of Mrs. William Ellis, at the time a prominent English leader and writer, who was not, by the way, connected with the family of Havelock Ellis. Her personality made a vivid and lasting impression upon Ellis. Often he has felt that he would like to have known better this forebear who died more than a quarter of a century before he was born.

The name Havelock — the Havelocks of Sunderland and Lincoln were also of Scandinavian origin, as may be seen from the name — comes to Ellis through his great-grandfather Wheatley, who married a Havelock. "The handsomest couple of their time," it was said at the wedding. His grandfather thus became first cousin to the English hero of the Indian Mutiny, Sir Henry Havelock, after whom Ellis was named by his mother. So naming

her child, however, Mrs. Ellis had in mind, not the military exploits of the man (despite the many soldiers in her family), but rather his lofty character and his religious disposition. Sir Henry enjoyed, in addition, a reputation as an intellectual force, and had even in boyhood been nicknamed "the Philosopher"; to Ellis that nickname came much later in life.

The Havelocks, then, like the Wheatleys, had been much associated with the sea. Captain Wheatley's wife, Ellis's maternal grandmother, was an Oliver of Suffolk. The Olivers also are apparently of Danish stock, a large, robust, vigorous race. "You look as though you had come to confer a favor rather than to ask it," said Lord Cornwallis to an Oliver who waited on him to request a commission in the army. There was sometimes a tendency among them to be daringly "wild." The last surviving Uncle Oliver of Ellis's mother, — he who had given her away in marriage, and whom Ellis recalls as a man of stately dignity, — had openly formed a *liaison* with his housekeeper and recognized his two sons. They lived with him and accompanied him on his visits to the Ellis home. At a later time a young Oliver had been sent off by his father to the other side of the world to start afresh, and liberally furnished with money for this end. By the time he reached the ship at Liverpool the money was all spent.

Though the Olivers were not on the whole as handsome as the Wheatleys, they were free of the slowness and languor that seems to have oppressed that family. The Oliver women, too, were noted for their abundant and beautiful hair. Whether in the commercial or the pro-

fessional fields, the Olivers for two centuries displayed unwonted enterprise and love of adventure, winning success and prosperity wherever their energy took them and holding to this day a prominent place among the citizenry of Suffolk. That energy, as we have seen, flowed into Ellis's maternal grandmother, who was Susanna Oliver. She seems, in her own so different way, to have been a precursor of the noble and notable woman whom Ellis married in 1891. In Ellis's ancestry she has a companion in this exceptionality.

I have mentioned the colorless paternal grandmother of Ellis. Her own mother, however, married to a prosperous yeoman-farmer in the Isle of Wight, of the name of Gray, was a remarkable woman who stands out from the other near ancestors of Ellis. Despite the huge family that she tended, she was by nature a sort of mystic. Lacking the culture of the schools, she nevertheless worked out for herself ways of independent thinking and feeling that linked her to the processes of mysticism. A little biography of her was published after her death.

Going farther back, Ellis traces his descent, through both father and mother, to a host of seventeenth and eighteenth century churchmen. There were numerous parsons; sometimes through four generations, — the Kebles, the Powles and the Peppens, all belonging to Suffolk. The evidence unearthed by Ellis goes to show that these were in the main gentlemen of very considerable ability and character, and surely several cuts above the average clerical level. Thus, they were all at Cambridge, and not infrequently figured as Fellows of their respective Colleges. They all held good livings in the country, though

none of them secured, or apparently desired to secure, high ecclesiastical preferment, being content to be parsons and country squires among their own people.

Among the most remarkable of these is the earliest, William Keble, B.D. He belonged to an ancient manorial family, of Danish stock, and settled near Stowmarket in Suffolk from before the Norman Conquest. Their history has been investigated. They were country aristocrats, evidently of a vigorous and independent sort. William Keble and his brother, Richard, belonged to the days of Charles I. The one an ecclesiastic, the other a lawyer, they took opposite sides in the struggles between King and Parliament; each adhered to his party out of a stout independence, regardless of personal fortunes. William, indeed, paid heavily for his Royalism. He had spent much of his life at Cambridge, was a Fellow, and something of a scholar. He was persecuted, robbed, and driven out of his living, yet does not seem to have harbored any vindictive feelings. He died just before the Restoration and his funeral sermon was preached by the noted Puritan divine, Fairfax.[1] His brother became an eminent judge; when the Lord Chancellorship was abolished he was appointed a Commissioner of the Privy Seal. Richard has sometimes been counted among the regicides; incorrectly, it seems. When, at the Restoration, he was proscribed, he is supposed to have fled to Switzerland. It

[1] He figures in Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*. I have it on the authority of Mr. Ellis that Keble, the ecclesiastical poet, who is sometimes stated by his biographers to be descended from the Suffolk Kebles, is not connected with them.

Through the Keble family Ellis is remotely connected with a Lord Chancellor, Lord Thurlow, famous though not always admired.

is more likely that he was allowed to remain unmolested in seclusion at his own countryside. His funeral monument there is deliberately vague as to the place and date of his death.

The Peppens, intermarrying with the Powles, thus furnished Ellis with three or four direct ancestors, all in the Church, and again all by double ancestry. From early times the Powles had been settled in Bury St. Edmonds, Suffolk. In the fifteenth century their wills show them to be established as well-to-do craftsmen. At the end of the sixteenth century they produced a restless, pushful, eccentric scion, concerning whom Ellis, out of his curious interest, has managed to accumulate a wealth of material. Paul Powle was a sort of lawyer who moved well out of the orbit of his ancestors and descendants. He allied himself to the Puritan party within the Church, and soon distinguished himself for his aggressiveness, his grasping, unscrupulous ways, his ability to acquire property. He had a minor genius for getting into trouble, for considering himself the aggrieved party while his opponents held themselves rather to be the wronged. Yet he seems to have retained the good opinion of his fellow citizens, despite his frequent appearance in the courts, either as plaintiff or defendant; despite even his occasional occupancy of a prison cell. He was brought before the ecclesiastical court for simony and finally excommunicated. Archbishop Laud has described him as "a very troublesome man," and that, thinks Mr. Ellis, was to put it mildly. He died in obscurity at an unknown date. His family, however, to whom he was deeply devoted, inherited much of his property, including the living of

Great Waldingfield, near Sudbury in Suffolk, which he had bought for his son John. John, a little eccentric and very pious, was in other respects unlike his father; he was a man of honor and integrity. His son, William, succeeded in turn to the living and seems to have been a model country parson, — a gentleman of fine abilities. Dying in 1727, William left no male heir; his only son, intended to succeed him, had died at Cambridge, to the great grief of the father. William's daughter Susannah married the Rev. Richard Peppen, who succeeded to the living and was Ellis's latest clerical ancestor. Their son, Powle Peppen, an inconspicuous farmer, had two daughters, the one noted for beauty as the other was for cleverness. The beauty married an Oliver of Bury St. Edmonds, the wit married an Ellis of Sudbury; each thus became a great-grandmother to Havelock Ellis. It is interesting to note that one of the Ellises, who were substantial burgesses of Sudbury, where they had long been settled, had owned the Sudbury Inn later brought into the *Pickwick Papers* by Dickens and standing until recently. The Ellises were not a churchly people; they belonged, incidentally, to the same chapel with the family of the painter, Gainsborough, and were closely associated with them.

Ellis's great-grandfather Ellis, after marrying the Peppen girl, became the first of the family to migrate to London. He was a corn merchant, and later he also set up a draper's shop at Covent Garden; to him Mrs. Siddons used to come for her stockings. Finally he retired to a house in the north of London which still stands. He was recalled by his grandson — Ellis's father — as a dig-

nified old gentleman in knee breeches. But the Ellises were, or became by migration to London, though generally healthy and long-lived, far less massive and robust than the men of the old fair-skinned Wheatley and Oliver stock. They grew more slender, lithe and alert, — a family of urban type, temperamentally sober and moderate.

III

It should be of interest to Americans, in view of the sympathy with which they have received the works of Ellis from the beginning, that his chief ancestral focus is situated at precisely the same small spot which is the chief focus whence proceeded the earliest spiritual influences of America. The Emersons have been traced to Saffron Walden, just over the Suffolk border. They are, in fact, sprinkled all over Suffolk. The Whitmans have not been definitely traced, but the name occurs in the neighborhood even today, and may have arisen there. Indeed, all over the district in which Ellis's family is rooted there still occur names that are revered in the United States and that belong to distant relations of families that are still prosperous in the republic. Thus, from Great Waldingfield itself, which for over a century was the residence of the Ellises, come the Appletons. In the village of Groton the litigious Paul Powle was the friend and neighbor of Adam Winthrop, father of the famous John Winthrop. The diary of Adam Winthrop, now in the British Museum, contains many curious details about the acquisitive fellow. Thus Havelock Ellis's spiritual association with America begins centuries before his birth.

His ancestors were the neighbors, friends and associates of these spiritual pioneers of America. Ultimately, it seems certain, they were even of the same blood.

Ellis, then, is on each side half of old Suffolk stock; of the remaining two quarters, the paternal quarter is old Isle of Wight stock and the maternal, old Durham. In this combination the Danish and Scandinavian elements preponderate. Ellis himself regards the Suffolk stocks, found on both sides, as being especially deep and influential in his constitution. It is not a question of environment, as these ancestors left Suffolk two generations ago. Against any influence of tradition, Ellis without doubt would have rebelled; at any rate, his family had forgotten its own history. He has expressed these varying ancestral forces in his own independent manner. Thus the religious strain has turned upon itself in an analysis of the religious spirit; thus the blood of the sea-farers has, in his veins, urged him on to adventure in spiritual seas.

CHAPTER THREE

Childhood — Around the World — Schooling

I

THERE is an interesting passage in the Third Series of Ellis's *Impressions and Comments* that helps to throw light upon the symbolism of the man's career. He begins with a discussion of the Chinese fondness of fireworks and is reminded, by Bertrand Russell's observation, of the prevalence of fireworks throughout the philosophical writings of Bergson. This, in turn, leads him to a philosophical observation of his own.

"At the core of every philosopher's heart," he writes, "it may well be, there lies some simple clue [1] which, when we have found it, may guide us through the maze of his work. That was long ago pointed out in detail by Alexander Fraser. Vision is the key to the philosophies of Berkeley and Hume, and to a less degree those of Hobbes and Locke; Hegel was obsessed by electricity, and so on.

"Now the way is clear to accept Bergson as in the same great tradition. We see, moreover, that the ancient people now enthusiastically acclaimed as the deepest philosophers, the most exquisite lovers of beauty, the wisest

[1] This is a favorite notion of Ellis's; see, for example, the essay on Nietzsche, in *Affirmations*.

artists in life the world has ever known, are above all peoples the amateurs of fireworks. So that if Bergson has spent his life gravely in exploding crackers on the temple steps he is in the end justified, and the devotees of this much-debated philosophy of fireworks may henceforth worship in peace."

Applying to Ellis his own observation, we may liken him to Heraclitus in that the clue to his philosophy is to be found in earth's deep waters. His mind, his conception of things, his treatment of them, — these assume a world ever in flux. His earliest poems, like his very latest meditations, reveal the abiding image of the sea. Water and rock, symbols of eternal change in eternal changelessness! As our blood is the stream of life, so is the sea the blood of all living. And as for Ellis, the sea is doubly in his blood. He comes of a hardy race of mariners, who left him as heritage a love of the ocean and the spirit of discovery. He has sailed the eternal seas of his ancestors, too; he has sailed symbolic seas, uncharted upon their maps and but dimly visioned in their dreams.

This love of the deep it was that first attracted him to the writings of Joseph Conrad. In *The Philosophy of Conflict*, considering the novels of the famous Anglicized Pole, he has given us a glimpse into his own childhood influences and adventures.

"When I consider that Mr. Conrad's readers have chiefly known the sea from the esplanade of a summer holiday resort; that even if by rare chance they have gone round the world, it has almost certainly been by steam, a method of progression which, as Mr. Conrad has so well

pointed out, can reveal little or nothing of ships, or of the life of sailors, or even of the genius of the sea, I realize that these people inevitably lack that concealed reservoir of emotional experience in his reader on which the artist must draw for his most profoundly intimate appeals. So that reader regards himself as elect who on both sides of his family is of the sea, the son and the grandson of sailors, whose forefathers have once and again sailed from port never to be heard of again, and when they were not sailors found consolation as ship-builders, or spent their lives in the warehouses of those mysteriously attractive Docks of the Thames where all the wines of Europe are arrayed in long avenues of casks, and all the spices of the East stored in legendary profusion. And if he can also recall that as a child, and many a time later, he wandered round that Circular Quay at Sydney which seems to lie at the heart of Mr. Conrad's world; that he has again and again sailed, but never steamed, round the Cape and the Horn, once at least on the ship's articles, and even as a child of six, with a fellow navigator of much the same age, explored in a dinghy the rocks round the Chincha Islands for starfish, he feels that in Mr. Conrad's art he has reached a long-sought shrine which all men now behold but few can enter. A veil of mist may intervene between that remote life and the totally different life of the present, but to enter Conrad's novels is as when Pythagoras entered the temple at Argos and recognized on its walls, with what mysterious stirring of the soul, the shield that had been his own in a previous existence."

II

Havelock Ellis was born on February 2, in the great year of 1859,[1] at Croydon, Surrey, in a little flint-built house close to the fine olden church where he was baptized. His mother, born in 1830, was thus twenty-nine at his birth; his father, thirty-two. Havelock was a large and fine baby, with a large head, as his childhood picture shows; at sixty-seven his head is still larger than normal. There seems to have been a certain delicateness as a child. From time to time he was taken to physicians, but just what the delicacy consisted in is not known. It was perhaps a vague disorder, and may have been connected with digestion, since Ellis's digestion has never been of the best. Indeed, from the age of 12 to the age of 18, he was subject to very severe abdominal attacks, which

[1] Long before he dreamed that his own birth would confer added distinction upon the year, — in one of his very first books, indeed, — Ellis paused for a paragraph upon the memorability of the year 1859. "In the year 1859 — perhaps the most memorable of the century — Broca, who had a decided influence on Lombroso, had inaugurated the naturalist method of treating man with the Anthropological Society of Paris. The illuminating genius of Virchow, and his prodigious energy, which has done so much for anthropology, and the methods of anthropology, also had its influence on the Italian, in some respects a kindred spirit. And Darwin's *Origin of Species*, published in 1859, supplied, for the first time, an indispensable biological basis, and furnished that atavistic key of which Lombroso was tempted to make at first so much use, sometimes, it must be added, so much abuse. These circumstances combined to render possible, for the first time, the complete scientific treatment of the criminal man as a human variety, while Lombroso's own manifold studies and various faculties had given him the best preparation for approaching this great task. It was in 1859 that he first conceived this task; *L'Uomo Delinquente* was not, however, finally published until 1876, while the third volume appeared only in 1897." *The Criminal*, Fifth Edition, Revised and Enlarged, 1910.

the doctors of that period could not diagnose. Today, he considers them to have been clearly a form of chronic appendicitis. As a child, then, and even as a youth, Ellis seems to have lacked vigor and endurance. Yet from his seventeenth to his sixtieth year he never knew any illness beyond the measles, scarlet fever and influenza. Indeed, his first really serious illness did not come until his sixty-second year, when he suffered a severe attack of duodenal ulcer. Since then there has been no recurrence; his mode of life has been careful and simple.

Havelock was the eldest of five children, and the only boy. Until his sixth year he was thrust much upon his own resources, with no companions of his own age and only a few books for solace. One may speculate, for a passing moment, upon the influence of these surroundings in shaping his characteristic shyness in society, both as a child and later; and also — with four sisters in the family — in suggesting his subsequent investigations into man and woman. At the tender age of six we find him already a sea-farer in the long tradition of his family, journeying under the captaincy of his father to Sydney, Australia, upon the American-built ship, "The Empress." Sailing from Queenstown, Ireland, they took on, curiously enough, two Bishops and a great number of priests and nuns. To the care of one of these nuns, a pretty girl called Sister Agnes, was entrusted the teaching of little Havelock during the passage. To all intents and purposes, then, the education of Ellis began in a floating convent! The ship that carried him must have done its great share in the Catholicization of Australia. For the rest, he was in the care of the steward, an excellent and intel-

ligent German whom he still recalls through the sixty years that have intervened between that voyage and today. The steward it was who entertained this inquisitive child with beautifully illustrated books upon natural history. In the ship's library, too, were Hans Andersen and Marryat's *Masterman Ready*, which he read with joy.

From Sydney little Ellis sailed with his father for Peru, — to Callao and the Chincha Islands, for guano. Here he made the explorations that I have just quoted from his essay on Conrad. Here he found his first girl playmate of his own age, — a captain's daughter with whom he would play at keeping house together, with all due innocence, among the folds of the great sails on deck. Here, too, he laid the unconscious foundations for his book on *The Soul of Spain*. Harking back, in the Preface of that book, to those distant days, he relates that he was taken by his father from Callao to Lima, the capital of Peru. "It was the first great foreign city I had seen, and the unfamiliar features of its streets, such as elsewhere have since become so familiar to me — the huge gateways, the pleasant courtyards one looked into beyond — made an ineffaceable impression on my mind. It has since seemed to me a fact not without significance that this first glimpse of the non-Anglo-Saxon world should have been to a foreign city founded on those Spanish traditions which have since been so attractive to me, so potent to thrill or to charm." Ellis, so to speak, entered Spain through Spanish America; he was one of the few English men of letters to notice the passing of the Uruguayan, Rodó,[1] when that fine spirit died his lonesome death in

[1] See the short essay devoted to him in *The Philosophy of Conflict*.

1917, in far-off Italy. From Peru the voyage turned to Antwerp, and thus the child completed a twelve months' circuit. Antwerp was not only the first part of Continental Europe upon which Ellis set foot; it was the scene of an even more memorable occasion, — his first visit to a circus.

III

Returning to England, Ellis was put to school as a day-boy, near London, and here he remained until his twelfth year. By temperament and early environment destined to introspection, he added to this quality the stimulations of a trip around the world before his eighth year. Nature had given him depth; travel had given him breadth. Already, before he enters upon his studies, he is the embryo of his later personality; he has known a number of continents, has gazed in childish wonder upon several civilizations, heard different tongues being spoken in their native lands, assimilated through the variety of his adventures and the pliancy of his character a tolerance toward earth's places and earth's creatures. That chapter on The Art of Traveling which was originally intended to form part of *The Dance of Life* goes back to these juvenile adventures. These days have remained with him, peculiarly vivid and ready to recur to his pen throughout his writings, even in the least expected places. Thus, writing in the final volume of his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*[1] on the ties of marriage, he suddenly thinks of himself as a child of seven. ". . . I chanced to be in a semi-tropical island of the Pacific, well supplied

[1] Vol VI. Page 476.

THE "EMPRESS"

American built, and owned by Hendon Brothers of London, whose house flag (Maltese cross) is seen flying from the mainmast. It was in this vessel that the six-year-old Ellis, under the captaincy of his father, sailed around the globe (London, Queenstown, Sydney, Callao, Chincha Islands, Antwerp) in 1865–66. The painting was commissioned by Ellis's father shortly after this voyage.

The Birthplace of Havelock Ellis, St. John's Grove, Croydon

with fruit, especially grapes, from the mainland, and a dusky market woman always presented a large bunch of grapes to the little English stranger. But a day came when the proffered bunch was firmly refused; the superabundance of grapes had produced a reaction of disgust. A space of nearly forty years was needed to overcome the repugnance to grapes thus acquired. Yet there can be no doubt that if at the age of six that little boy had been asked to sign a contract binding him to accept grapes every day, to keep them always near him, to eat them and enjoy them every day, he would have signed that contract as joyously as any radiant bridegroom or demure bride signs the registry in the vestry." In Ellis there was no precocious interest in sex (that is, occurring before the coming of puberty) and long before any sex curiosity had arisen, his fondness for books had been definitely established. It is interesting — and may even be significant — that Ellis knew no early initiation into sex. His life as a youth is marked by a singular chastity of mind and body. The auto-erotic indulgences of boyhood were foreign to him, as were later the venereal ailments to which youthful incontinence exposes itself.

Ellis's earliest efforts at writing were made at about the age of twelve or even earlier, and this, despite the fact that there was nothing in the environment or in the family tradition to impel a youngster in such a direction. The first opus actually written — what a rarity it would be, could one but lay hands upon it! — was a little book entitled *The Precious Stones of the Bible.* What could have been the impulse behind so ambitious a project? There was no obvious reason for Ellis's choice of the sub-

ject, and the literature at his disposal for diligent research was limited. It seems most likely that his innate abilities were already groping for expansion and expression. Perhaps it is not without significance that this juvenile work sought to gather into a unified collection what up to that time had existed only in scattered state. Look forward to that beautiful book, *The Dance of Life;* what, in effect, has Ellis there done if not to collect the precious stones of life itself, which for most of us lie scattered aimlessly in the blurred pages of the puzzling text, and arrayed them in a new beauty that derives from the unity of the separate juxtaposed beauties? We may, then, look upon *The Precious Stones of the Bible* as a characteristic literary beginning; the sensitive child, reaching outward, thus established first contact with scholarship.

Verse, so often the earliest manifestations of a creative gift, came to Ellis only after this experiment in lapidary research. Juvenile initiation into the pangs of love, — a remote, idealized passion, — elicited his first poems. Of his poetic output he has chosen to publish formally only his sonnets; as we shall see when we come to consider them, they were written long after this love affair at the age of twelve, between his seventeenth and his twenty-fifth year, and forecast the trend of his later thinking and feeling.

It was with this episode of his twelfth year in mind that seven years later, in his Australian loneliness, Ellis set down an imaginary later meeting with the lass of his devotion. She was a vivacious brunette of sixteen, a connection of his mother's, and had been invited by her to spend a few weeks in the house. Ellis's sisters were chil-

dren, the eldest being four years his junior, so that Havelock became her chief companion. On parting, he lent her his edition of Keats and she lent him *The Wide Wide World*. After that, nothing. A coldness chanced to grow up between their mothers and they never met again. Yet Havelock's devotion to her burned brightly, without any nourishment, for three years. Not a breath of it did he whisper to her or to any other living soul. She was his first illusion in matters of love, and the last. I transcribe the poem exactly as it stands on the long blue sheet where the nineteen-year-old youth indited it, at Sparkes Creek, Scone, N.S.W., in June of 1878.

TO ——

1

I see you now again:
  Three long years have passed
Since those sweet autumns weeks
  You and I together passed.

2

And memory recalls
  All that you were to me,
As sunlight to the earth,
  As moonlight to the sea.

3

I think of all these things:
  The cornfields and the August air,
The music that was in your speech,
  The purple that was on your hair.

4

I think of each sweet act,
  Each well-remembered word,
Each glance, each curve of lip,
  And all the chords they stirred;

5

And how your beauty came and struck
  The beauty into things;
And how within my heart my thoughts
  Sang as a poet sings.

6

And now I look upon these curls,
  Each tress I touched so fondly once,
They are the same black glossy curls,
  The curls I touched so fondly once.

7

I look upon the same fair form,
  Hear the same voice as erst;
Each glance, each curve of lip,
  Are all as at the first.

8

As at first, and yet,
  I know not how it is,
Not all as once, for love,
  Love has gone out of these.

9

The loveliness will never go:
The old divine earth is still fair,
The grandeur still is on the sea,
And a glory in the air.

The poem, here and there inept, flashes now and again upon the reader with a glint of elemental simplicity, with a perfect phrasing that seems the only verbal image for the feeling behind it. Consider, as an instance of such phrasal felicity, the first two lines of the fifth stanza, the eighth stanza complete, and the last two lines of the ninth. Here is the very music of reminiscence. The verses are at this moment important for us, however, chiefly as the reverberation of a childish passion. That it should have lingered so hauntingly in the memory bears testimony to its deep impress upon a young life which it must have tinged with its deep, if fading, hue.

In the years between twelve and seventeen, the youngster Ellis was on the whole far more occupied with problems of religious adjustment than with the more earthly passions. He was being brought up as a Christian, by a mother who adhered to the Evangelical school of the English Church. Until the age of fifteen, indeed, he was devoutly religious. Yet it was not God who preoccupied him; he never took the slightest interest in that worthy. What did interest him intensely, however — and here again we come upon a youthful forecast of his later career in psychology — was the question of how to live the religious life. There was never about him anything of the "pious" child; by religious life he under-

stood, not the rote of ritual, not the observance of dogmatic and traditional prescriptions, but that broad, undenominational adjustment of self to the universe which finds its fulfillment in truth, honor and unselfishness.

IV

Ellis was not a "bookish," any more than he was a "pious," child; his maturity reveals an independence of literary authority that runs parallel with his autonomy in matters of the spirit. We have seen with what eagerness, at the age of six, he devoured the fairy tales of Andersen, and Marrayat's *Masterman Ready*. Between twelve and fifteen he became particularly fond of Walter Scott, and even re-read his favorites. Yet already he had come to look upon books as merely tools, — as approaches to, not substitutes for, the life that they depicted. At eleven or twelve he discovered Longfellow. "I still have a tender regard for him," he has told me; "'the greatest of the minor poets,' as Arthur Symons once called him."

His schooling was entirely private, yet he has written with a distinct inclination toward the benefits of the public school. Formal study began for him at Croydon, as soon as he had returned from his trip around the world. At seven he was sent to a school maintained for boys exclusively; it was presided over by a Mrs. Granville, with several competent assistants. Ellis recalls the head as a remarkable personality, a disciple of Pestalozzi. He next was sent to Merton, which in these later days has become practically a suburb of London. Here he entered a

school called the French and German College, conducted by a Mr. de Chastelain, of French origin though probably of English birth. The building that housed the school is now fairly in ruins and condemned to destruction; in the days of Ellis's attendance it was a fine ancient structure dating back to the times of Elizabeth or earlier. There is a tradition that Sheridan once lived here, although Ellis has never been able to find substantial proof of the dramatist's residence. There was without doubt, however, a little theatre attached to one of the wings of the house; for school purposes it had been transformed into a swimming pool and gymnasium. At both these early schools Ellis was entered as a day-boy.

At twelve he was sent by his mother to Mitcham, a few miles from London, where he was a weekly boarder. Every Saturday, at noon, he would walk home, as his mother wished him not to lose touch entirely with home life. The place at Mitcham was a small and rather high-class school, but the education afforded was commonplace. The Head Master was a somewhat eccentric but kindly fellow whose weakness ran to a fondness for rhyming. Indeed, just before Ellis's entrance into the classes, the man had perpetrated an anti-Darwinian tirade and had published his doggerel in pamphlet-form. The remedy must have struck the public as being worse than the disease, for it was not long before the pamphlet, for the coarseness of its humor, was removed from the railway bookstalls.

School life had little or no influence upon the boy. Almost the only subject that Ellis began to learn with a certain amount of interest and thoroughness was French,

under the tutelage of a Mr. Joseph Stevens. He had had, from the first, good instructors in that tongue; at Mitcham, moreover, the teacher was not only competent, but glowed with enthusiasm and personal charm. Ellis associated with him to some extent out of school hours, during which meetings, at the wish of his student, the teacher began to give him lessons in German. Parallel with this outside instruction in German went Ellis's self-tuition in yet another tongue, Italian.

"The one really significant event for me of my school life was the presence of the assistant English master at Mitcham. Angus MacKay was some six years older than I was; he became assistant master soon after I entered the school and was there when I left. Unlike the Head, he was a man of real intellectual force, a singularly acute mind, a vivid temperament, sensitively alive on every side, and above all enthusiastically though critically alert to all the latest manifestations of English literature and art. He had already published two small volumes of verse. Later he published a notable study of the Brontës which attracted attention by its insight and originality."

MacKay was eventually to carry the independence and the unconventionality of his spirit into the English Church, where he allied himself with the most advanced Liberal wing. He died, some thirty years later, before his reputation was fully established. "I cannot say," continues Ellis, in the letter from which I have quoted in the paragraph preceding, "that MacKay had any influence in moulding me, and I had begun to write before I met him, but his value for me was immense. He was exactly the guide and liberator I needed. He opened for

me a whole new world of life and thought, which I should in any case have found, but not under such auspicious circumstances or so easily and rapidly. We soon became friends and the friendship continued until his death although our paths in life were so unlike." [1]

When, at the age of sixteen, Ellis left this school to sail again for Australia on his father's ship, "The Surrey," he was one of the head boys. Yet he left behind no trail of brilliancy, while on the playing fields, though he took part in all the usual games, he never attained any proficiency. The southern continent was to be the real school, the post-graduate course of this lone spirit who had never attended a university. Here, in the Bush, thrust by accident into teaching, he was to discover that vast, dark continent which is oneself.

[1] From a letter to me dated October 8, 1925.

CHAPTER FOUR

Youth — Australia — "Conversion" — First Writings

I

JUST as Ellis's childhood fairly begins with a trip around the world in a sailing vessel, so his youth is marked by another and more consequential voyage to Australia. Though there was no presence of clearly marked disease, he does not seem to have been robust; he had no "stamina," thought the family physician, who feared that the youngster was threatened with consumption. The fears, as Ellis's clinical history shows, were groundless, his only serious illness having been associated with the digestive tract. It may well be that his thinness, characteristic of him throughout his life, conspired with his lack of vigorousness to suggest the tubercular diathesis.

At any rate, at the age of 16 we find him again en route for Australia, and again under the captaincy of his hardy father. No fairy tales from Andersen now; no discoveries in Marryat; no tutelage under a pretty Sister Agnes. Shelley, from Ellis's fifteenth to his seventeenth year, is his idol, — not only a great poet but a religion, a sort of "Saviour of the World." The boy has for him something of the same sort of personal feeling that

genuine Christians have for Jesus. He is carrying in his head the scheme for a vast dramatic poem in blank verse; it is to embody his personal aspirations and experiences. On board "The Surrey" he sets down numerous fragments. The entire conception seems to have been clearly suggested to him by such prototypes as Alexander Smith's *Life-Drama*, Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh* and Bailey's *Festus*, all of which had deeply impressed him shortly before. However, ere his seventeenth birthday has come, the idea has been outgrown and abandoned. Ellis approaches the south more robust in mind than in body; the forsaken dramatic poem seems to prefigure his intellectual activities on the great island. The four years of his stay, indeed, were to prove of immense benefit, not only physically, but spiritually. Ellis was, as I have said, to find himself on this island continent. Inasmuch as emigrants were being carried to the far-off possession, it was technically against the regulations to take passengers. To circumvent this ruling young Ellis was entered on the ship's articles as "captain's clerk." At Plymouth (where he was taken by his father for the first visit to a theatre) the government agent commented on his tall, well-grown appearance and seemed rather alarmed for the virtue of the single women emigrants. The ship's doctor, however, must have regarded Henry Havelock with a somewhat dubious eye, for he advised that the boy be left behind at Sydney, as the climate of the next port, Calcutta, might not be suitable for him. This is the accidental circumstance that altered the entire face of events for Ellis. Through a friend of his father a post was found for him at Burwood near Sydney as assistant master in

a school; here he remained for a few months before proceeding to Carcoar. Accident had made of him a teacher, and it is during these early years that he learns far more than he teaches. It is the Australian Bush that wakens the mature poet in him; for the next eight years he is to set down his budding soul in verse. From private tutoring near Carcoar he advances, in 1877, two years after his arrival, to a private school of his own, at Grafton on the Clarence, — a position into which he fell through the sudden death of the Head Master, who had engaged him as an assistant. Shortly before this he had matriculated at Sydney University, but never proceeded to graduation. The following year we find him at Sparkes Creek in the Liverpool Range (the *Kanga Creek* of his solitary excursion into fiction) in charge of a Government school under the Board of Education.

From the pages of *Kanga Creek* — a tale appreciably autobiographic, as well as an idealized and idyll-ized account of the Australian epoch — we may reconstruct the scene as Ellis found it upon his coming. First, there is the Creek of the title:

> . . . little more than a string of silent pools; the black roots of the sombre shea-oaks along its edge were distinct in the moonlight as they seemed to twist among the stone down to the water. A few scattered red gum-trees went up to the soft far-away sky and a faint dream-like mist bathed the large outlines of the hills around. It was very still. The small vacant schoolhouse stood on a flat a hundred yards from the Creek, with its little verandah and its rough fence. Everything seemed asleep after the scorching January days of drought, and no wind swept down that night through the gorge at the head of the valley or tumbled like an

ocean among the hills. No other human habitation could be seen. There were few signs of life; nothing but a distant curlew's melancholy long-drawn cry. Once a native cat climbed the chimney and made his way noisily down inside. Then nothing more might be heard save now and again the awkward flight of a great moth. The strong bright moon sailed across the clear sky and sank behind the western range, leaving a last kiss on the summit of the tallest gum-trees. After that the valley was left to the stars.

Then the youth himself:

In the evening an English youth had entered a saloon carriage at Sydney station; he was about eighteen years old. . . . He carried a small black bag from which he at once drew out a book and began to read. In his pocket were several large official documents, including one which appointed him Teacher of the Half-Time Schools at Kanga Creek and Blair's Creek.

Now and again the young traveller looked out; he saw nothing but an immense series of dim vast slopes, and feeling the cool night air he buttoned up his coat and tried to go to sleep. As the hours passed on the train stopped occasionally at some small station. At these moments a profound silence could be felt. There seemed to the youth something heroic and pathetic in the energy that had perched these rough little emblems of civilization on the mountain ledges. Humanity appeared as a huge Don Quixote.

At last they reached the end of the line and the young Englishman followed the other passengers, hastening to fill the little omnibus which carried them into the town. At the Club House he was among those who stood for hours shivering at the entrance, waiting for the Ayr Coach; it was cold, even in January, at early morning on these high table-lands. At last it came, a ricketty, uncomfortable little yellow vehicle which was to carry

fourteen persons, including a young woman who arrived late and found a resting-place on the knees of an outside passenger. Gold had lately been found near Ayr and there was just then a new rush in that direction. There was still a further pause of half-an-hour outside the post-office while the mail bags were served out to the various coaches. A grey light was in the sky as the heavily-laden coach jolted fiercely along the rough and silent road between the never-ending rows of ring-barked gum-trees. Once or twice it stopped for a few moments at a wayside inn or post-office to deliver the mails, and a hastily dressed figure appeared in the dim light and exchanged a few words with the driver. At one inn most of the men got down and entered. The young Englishman remained seated. By and by a clergyman who had been seated beside him and who appeared to know everyone on the road came back to the coach and pressed him to have some whisky; he refused. Now and then, in ascending a hill, it was necessary to walk. The young Englishman was faint and weary with the unaccustomed motion of the coach, but he was ashamed not to follow the example of the others and he toiled on with body bent forward and eyes fixed on the bushes at his feet, too tired to think of anything but the next step forward.

Now the road became smooth and the coach no longer flung the heads of its occupants against the roof. Here and there a farm lay back from the road and into many homes that coach as it wound among the hills brought a daily ray of life from the outside world. How many people were there in it? Who was driving it? Were they bay horses or grey? But the young Englishman knew little of these things; he had a vague sense that he was being carried into a new and strange world and he was too weary yet to be more than bewildered.[1]

[1] It should be remembered that *Kanga Creek* is not pure autobiography. Ellis here deliberately misleads the reader as regards this journey, which would never lead to Sparkes Creek, though it would to Carcoar.

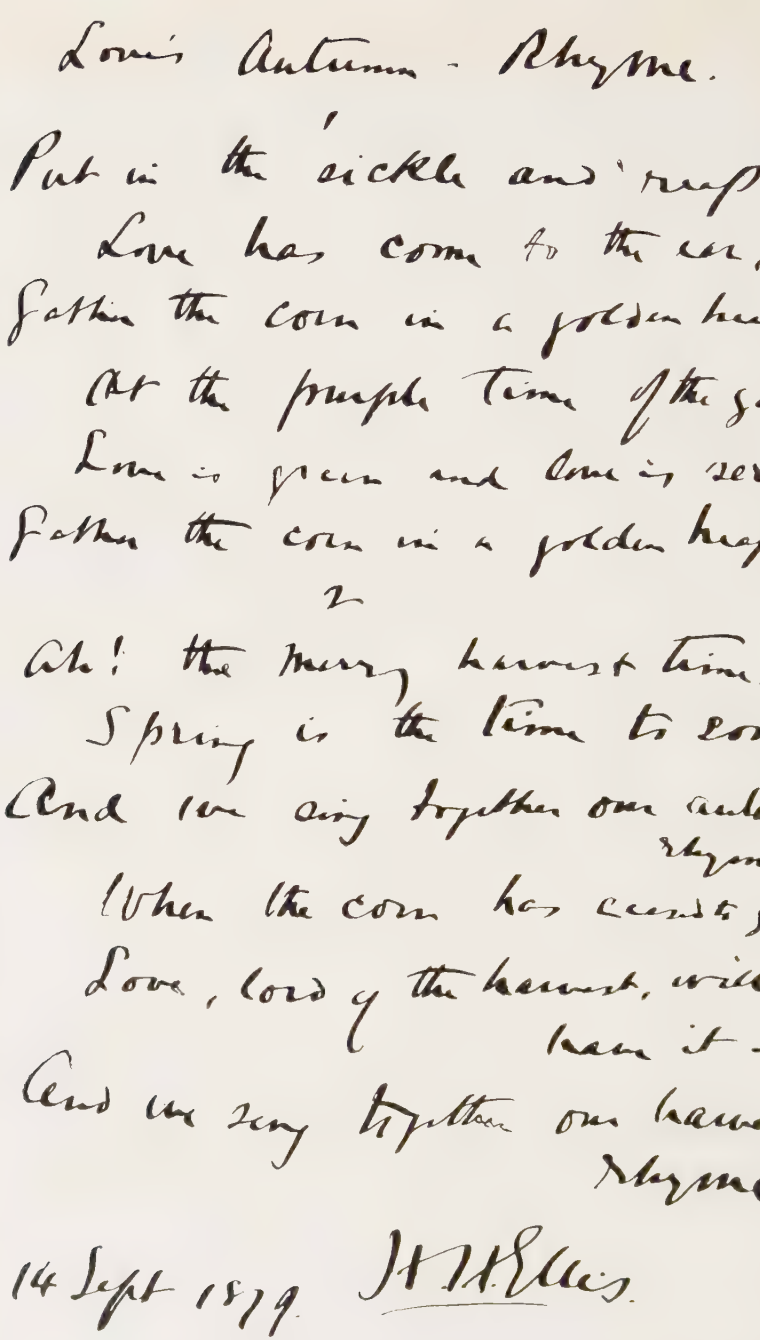
We have, too, a vivid picture of the schoolroom over which he presided, and in which, after class, he would spend so many lonely hours of meditation and high resolve. Australia, which brought him bodily vigor and a new, healthy adjustment to the universe, must too have taught him tears.

The young schoolmaster walked slowly back to the schoolhouse. He went through the ill-made gate and stood on the verandah; he looked at the place more carefully than at first. It was built of great rough-hewn slabs, some of which were loose and could be moved with slight effort. Inside it had once been papered over, but the paper had mostly fallen away, and here and there were great chinks between the slabs. The place was divided into four compartments, for the two at the back could scarcely be called rooms though one contained some shelves and a box that held the schoolbooks and registers. The two rooms each opened on to the little verandah. The schoolroom contained a table, and such desks and forms as were necessary for twelve or eighteen children; here was the fireplace; it was clear the room had served also as his predecessor's kitchen. The other had been his bedroom; it contained two pieces of furniture only, a four-legged stool and, for a bedstead, eight pieces of wood put together so as to sling a couple of flour sacks, forming a kind of hammock; there were also two sacks on the floor. After he had noticed these things and had seen also the extent of the property he had bought of Gray — an axe, a bucket, a broom, a saucepan, a frying-pan, a plate, a cup, a knife, a fork and two spoons — he sat down at the table with his head on his hands gazing vacantly at the opposite wall. He sat so still that at last three lean mice appeared on the floor and hopped cautiously about. Then he got up and went out. He walked slowly across the stony creek down by the grim shea-oaks, and along the narrow track, past a boulder

of red lichen-covered sandstone, that led to Carroll's farm. The little man saw him at the gate of the paddock, and came forward with his leisurely but business-like walk, and the little clay pipe thrust carelessly in the corner of his mouth. After a few remarks he said suddenly, with an outburst of decision: "I can't have you staying here any longer; you must clear out. I have got a sick daughter in there and my wife has to go about of nights. Me and my son Jim built yon schoolhouse and there you must bide." Then he closed his mouth and pressed his thin lips together with an air of determination, holding the little clay pipe in his hand. The young schoolmaster looked for a second at his scrubby grey chin and then said quietly: "Very well." Soon he had taken up the small black bag and was going, at first slowly, then very swiftly, along the little track past the red sandstone boulder towards the schoolhouse. He had been about to tell his resolve to live at the schoolhouse and he instinctively resented the little man's petulant outburst. It seemed like the climax to the series of petty miseries that had been descending upon him; he felt tired of this new strange life that he could not retreat from, even before it had begun. He walked still faster, and, as he went down by the gaunt black shea-oaks and stumbled over the smooth grey stones in the creek bed, his eyes were pricking and stinging as though they would burst. He thought it would be sweet to be a child to lie down and cry.

He had been a thoughtful child; he had become a searching, moody youth. As, in late childhood, books took precedence over sexual curiosity, so now, in his early manhood, attunement with the infinite comes before love's passion. The love episodes in *Kanga Creek* are imaginary; the moods, the mysteries, the meditations of this book alone are real. It was published as late as 1922, although it had been written some thirty-five years

Henry Havelock Ellis at the Age of Four


Love's Autumn-Rhyme.

1

Put in the sickle and reap!
Love has come to the ear,
Gather the corn in a golden heap
At the purple time of the year.
Love is green and Love is sere:
Gather the corn in a golden heap.

2

Ah! the merry harvest time.
Spring is the time to sow;
And we sing together our autumn-rhyme
When the corn has ceased to grow.
Love, Lord of the harvest, will
have it so.
And we sing together our harvest-rhyme.

14 Sept 1879 H. H. Ellis.

PHOTOGRAPH, FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT, OF AN EARLY POEM BY HAVELOCK ELLIS

The verses are penned in purple ink

before, during the early years of his friendship with Olive Schreiner, who had encouraged the writing of it. At the actual date of composition she and his friend Arthur Symons were the only ones to whom it was shown. The tale was published exactly as written originally, and it was natural for the man's readers to take it as a story out of his own youth. The environment, as we have seen, is fairly photographic. If I take the fiction out of its chronological order as a published document and consider it thus early in the account of Ellis's career, it is because it provides an admirable spiritual background for the man's development.

II

Read as it is printed, *Kanga Creek*, then, is a sweet tale about the alphabet of love. From far-off parts the hero has come to train the minds of these rampant youngsters of the barren Bush. Slowly his mind and body awaken to the first call of love, and slowly he responds; too slowly, indeed, for the schoolmistress who is the cause of this idyll, so swiftly begun and so swiftly to be nipped in the bud by circumstance.

To this aspiring youth, "Humanity appeared as a huge Don Quixote." He reads Heine or Montaigne or Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* and, in his exultation among the primitive hills, shouts German poetry into the atmosphere:

Es bleiben todt die Todten,
Und nur der Lebendige lebt!

Is there not something in these lines of Heine that might serve as the epigraph to Ellis's career?

> The living only are living,
> And the dead are forever dead.

And is it not characteristic of such a teacher that his first love should come out of a book — *Middlemarch* — which provides him with that ideal Dorothea whom he is soon to come upon in the guise of a schoolmistress? His books, literally, had made him ripe for the life that was hastening toward him. During his visits to Sydney he hears the Italian opera company; he revels in Rossini, Meyerbeer, Verdi. Back at Kanga Creek he ranges the hills again, repeating Swinburne softly to himself:

> Nothing is better I well think
> Than love; the hidden well water
> Is not so delicate to drink.

It is a poet's adolescence, brimful of outdoor vitality for all the bookishness that infuses it. And when he meets his love for the first time, it is a book that brings them together. Later they plumb the pages of Darwin and read — of all things — a chapter on Blushing. The book, like one that Paolo and Francesca read on a distant day, proves spiritually their Galeotto. This woman, to him, is a "new gospel, and every moment a fresh verse to the youth's hungry soul." Such a commingling of sex and divinity is no accident in Ellis's narrative or in the soul of the youth.

The youth and the maid are parted at last; it is a sweetly sad parting, and little more. Their experience has been not so much love as initiation into it. At the end the author casts a wistful glance into the past out of

which the tale has come and takes leave of it with a poetic sigh that echoes yet among his labors.

At the time of which the narrative treats, Ellis was more occupied with religion than with the tender passion. The chapter on The Art of Religion, in *The Dance of Life,* forms thus an emotional pendant to *Kanga Creek* and goes back to it likewise in point of time. This spiritual crisis is of such central importance to an understanding of Ellis that I quote generously from that part of the chapter which concerns the "conversion". To put the episode in other than his own words would be subtly to falsify it.

It seems to me, therefore, that, having gone so far, and stated what I consider to be the relations of mysticism and science as revealed in human history, I am bound to go farther and to state my personal grounds for believing that the harmonious satisfaction alike of the religious impulse and the scientific impulse may be attained to-day by an ordinary balanced person in whom both impulses crave for satisfaction. There is, indeed, a serious difficulty. To set forth a personal religious experience for the first time requires considerable resolution, and not least to one who is inclined to suspect that the experiences usually so set forth can be of no profound or significant nature; that if the underlying motives of a man's life can be brought to the surface and put into words their vital motive power is gone. The greatest truths, as Goethe said, cannot be spoken. Even the fact that more than forty years have passed since the experience took place, scarcely suffices to make the confession of it easy. But I recall to mind that the first original book I ever planned (and in fact began to write) was a book, impersonal though suggested by personal experience, on the foundations of religion. I put it aside, saying to myself I would complete it in old age, because it seemed

to me that the problem of religion will always be fresh, while there were other problems more pressingly in need of speedy investigation. Now, it may be, I begin to feel the time has come to carry that early project a stage further.

Like many of the generation to which I belonged, I was brought up far from the Sunday-school atmosphere of conventional religiosity. I received little religious instruction outside the home, but there I was made to feel, from my earliest years, that religion is a very vital and personal matter with which the world and the fashion of it had nothing to do. To that teaching, while still scarcely more than a child, I responded in a whole-hearted way. Necessarily the exercise of this early impulse followed the paths prescribed for it by my environment. I accepted the creed set before me; I privately studied the New Testament for my own satisfaction; I honestly endeavoured, strictly in private, to mould my actions and impulses on what seemed to be Christian lines. There was no obtrusive outward evidence of this; outside the home, moreover, I moved in a world which might be indifferent but was not actively hostile to my inner aspirations, and if the need for any external affirmation had become inevitable I should, I am certain, have invoked other than religious grounds for my protest. Religion, as I instinctively felt then and as I consciously believe now, is a private matter, as love is. This was my mental state at the age of twelve.

Then came the period of emotional and intellectual expansion, when the scientific and critical instincts began to germinate. These were completely spontaneous and not stimulated by any influences of the environment. To inquire, to question, to investigate the qualities of the things around us and to search out their causes, is as native an impulse as the religious impulse would be found to be if only we would refrain from exciting it artificially. In the first place, their scientific impulse was not greatly concerned with the traditional body of beliefs which were then

inextricably entwined in my mind with the exercise of the religious instinct. In so far, indeed, as it touched them it took up their defence. Thus I read Renan's *Life of Jesus*, and the facile sentiment of this book, the attitude of artistic reconstruction, aroused a criticism which led me to overlook any underlying sounder qualities. Yet all the time the inquiring and critical impulse was a slowly permeating and invading influence, and its application to religion was from time to time stimulated by books, although such application was in no slightest degree favoured by the social environment. When, too, at the age of fifteen, I came to read Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise* — although the book made no very personal appeal to me — I realised that it was possible to present in an attractively modern emotional light religious beliefs which were incompatible with Christianity, and even actively hostile to its creed. The process of disintegration took place in slow stages that were not perceived until the process was complete. Then at last I realised that I no longer possessed any religious faith. All the Christian dogmas I had been brought up to accept unquestioned had slipped away, and they had dragged with them what I had experienced of religion, for I could not then so far analyse all that is roughly lumped together as "religion" as to disentangle the essential from the accidental. Such analysis, to be effectively convincing, demanded personal experiences I was not possessed of.

I was now seventeen years of age. The loss of religious faith had produced no change in conduct, save that religious observances, which had never been ostentatiously performed, were dropped, so far as they might be without hurting the feelings of others. The revolution was so gradual and so natural that even inwardly the shock was not great, while various activities, the growth of mental aptitudes, sufficiently served to occupy the mind. It was only during periods of depression that the absence of faith as a satisfaction of the religious impulse became at all acutely felt. Possibly it might have been felt less acutely if I

could have realised that there was even a real benefit in the cutting down and clearing away of traditional and non-vital beliefs. Not only was it a wholesome and strenuous effort to obey at all costs the call of what was felt as "truth," and therefore having in it a spirit of religion even though directed against religion, but it was evidently favourable to the training of intelligence. The man who has never wrestled with his early faith, the faith that he was brought up with and that yet is not truly his own, — for no faith is our own that we have not arduously won — has missed not only a moral but an intellectual discipline. The absence of that discipline may mark a man for life and render all his work in the world ineffective. He has missed a training in criticism, in analysis, in open-mindedness, in the resolutely impersonal treatment of personal problems, which no other training can compensate. He is, for the most part, condemned to live in a mental jungle where his arm will soon be too feeble to clear away the growths that enclose him and his eyes too weak to find the light.

While, however, I had adopted, without knowing it, the best course to steel the power of thinking and to render possible a patient, humble, self-forgetful attitude towards Nature, there were times when I became painfully, almost despairingly, conscious of the unsatisfied cravings of the religious impulse. These moods were emphasised even by the books I read which argued that religion, in the only sense in which I understood religion, was unnecessary, and that science, whether or not formulated into a creed, furnished all that we need to ask in this direction. I well remember the painful feelings with which I read at this time D. F. Strauss's *The Old Faith and the New.* It is a scientific creed set down in old age, with much comfortable complacency, by a man who found considerable satisfaction in the evening of life in the enjoyment of Haydn's quartets and Munich brown beer. They are both excellent things, as I am now willing to grant, but they are a sorry source of inspiration

when one is seventeen and consumed by a thirst for impossibly remote ideals. Moreover, the philosophic horizon of this man was as limited and as prosaic as the aesthetic atmosphere in which he lived. I had to acknowledge to myself that the scientific principles of the universe as Strauss laid them down presented, so far as I knew, the utmost scope in which the human spirit could move. But what a poor scope! I knew nothing of the way that Nietzsche, about that time, had demolished Strauss. But I had the feeling that the universe was represented as a sort of factory filled by an inextricable web of wheels and looms and flying shuttles, in a deafening din. That, it seemed, was the world as the most competent scientific authorities declared it to be made. It was a world I was prepared to accept and yet a world in which, I felt, I could only wander restlessly, an ignorant and homeless child. Sometimes, no doubt, there were other visions of the universe a little less disheartening, such as that presented by Herbert Spencer's *First Principles*. But the dominant feeling always was that while the scientific outlook, by which I mainly meant the outlook of Darwin and Huxley, commended itself to me as presenting a sound view of the world, on the emotional side I was a stranger to that world, if indeed I would not, with Omar, "shatter it to bits."

At the same time, it must be noted, there was no fault to find with the general trend of my life and activities. I was fully occupied, with daily duties as well as with the actively interested contemplation of an ever-enlarging intellectual horizon. This was very notably the case at the age of nineteen, three years after all vestiges of religious faith had disappeared from the psychic surface.

I was still interested in religious and philosophic questions, and it so chanced that at this time I read the *Life in Nature* of James Hinton, who had already attracted my attention as a genuine man of science with yet an original and personal grasp of religion. I had read the book six months before and it had not

greatly impressed me. Now, I no longer know why, I read it again, and the effect was very different. Evidently by this time my mind had reached a stage of saturated solution which needed but the shock of the right contact to re-crystallise in forms that were a revelation to me. Here evidently the right contact was applied. Hinton in this book showed himself a scientific biologist who carried the mechanistic explanation of life even further than was then usual. But he was a man of highly passionate type of intellect, and what might otherwise be formal and abstract was for him soaked in emotion. Thus while he saw the world as an orderly mechanism he was not content, like Strauss, to stop there and see in it nothing else. As he viewed it, the mechanism was not the mechanism of a factory, it was vital, with all the glow and warmth and beauty of life; it was, therefore, something which not only the intellect might accept, but the heart might cling to. The bearing of this conception on my state of mind is obvious. It acted with the swiftness of an electric contact; the dull aching tension was removed; the two opposing psychic tendencies were fused in delicious harmony, and my whole attitude towards the universe was changed. It was no longer an attitude of hostility and dread, but of confidence and love. My self was one with the Notself, my will one with the universal will. I seemed to walk in light; my feet scarcely touched the ground; I had entered a new world.

The effect of that swift revolution was permanent. At first there was a moment or two of wavering, and then the primary exaltation subsided into an attitude of calm serenity towards all those questions that had once seemed so torturing. In regard to all these matters I had become permanently satisfied and at rest, yet absolutely unfettered and free. I was not troubled about the origin of the "soul" or about its destiny; I was entirely prepared to accept any analysis of the "soul" which might commend itself as reasonable. Neither was I troubled about the existence of any superior being or beings, and I was ready to see that all

the words and forms by which men try to picture spiritual realities are mere metaphors and images of an inward experience. There was not a single clause in my religious creed because I held no creed. I had found that dogmas were — not as I had once imagined true, not as I had afterwards supposed false — but the mere empty shadows of intimate personal experience. I had become indifferent to shadows for I had the substance. I had sacrificed what I held dearest at the call of what seemed to be Truth, and now I was repaid a thousand-fold. Henceforth I could face life with confidence and joy, for my heart was at one with the world, and whatever might prove to be in harmony with the world could not be out of harmony with me.

Thus, it might seem to many, nothing whatever had happened; I had not gained one single definite belief that could be expressed in a scientific formula or hardened into a religious creed. That, indeed, is the essence of such a process. A "conversion" is not, as is often assumed, a turning towards a belief. More strictly, it is a turning round, a revolution; it has no primary reference to any external object. As the greater mystics have generally understood, "the Kingdom of Heaven is within." To put the matter a little more precisely, the change is fundamentally a readjustment of psychic elements to each other, enabling the whole machine to work harmoniously There is no necessary introduction of new ideas; there is much more likely to be a casting out of dead ideas which have clogged the vital process. The psychic organism — which in conventional religion is called the "soul" — had not been in harmony with itself; now it is revolving truly on its own axis, and in doing so it simultaneously finds its true orbit in the cosmic system. In becoming one with itself it becomes one with the universe.

Call this rational mysticism, or what you will; Ellis has lived his faithless faith to the full. There is a beautiful passage in the Third Series of *Impressions and Com-*

ments that describes an encounter with the Reaper. The reference is undoubtedly to the attack of duodenal ulcer with which we are already acquainted. "Last week, when I was feeling, as ever since I left Cornwall I have felt, singularly firm against assault, Death, in his casual tentative way, just gave me a torturing prick with his scythe, as he passed by, leaving me alive but bleeding. Ever since, I lie on my back invalid, for the first time in my active life, and whether he is likely to come again soon there is none to tell me.

"Yet, I find, I remain serene, even continuously cheerful. For some years past I have accommodated my arrangements to Death and guided my activities accordingly, even though I may not yet have completed everything I had planned as the minimum — for I am content the maximum should go — of My Day's Work — My Day's Play — in the world. Without rest yet without haste — it is the law of my nature which I have no intention of changing now. My faith has carried me through so far and will accompany me to the end. Death is the final Master and Lord. But Death must await my good pleasure. I command Death because I have no fear of Death, but only love."

Here is a real, not merely a rhyming, captain of his soul.

III

The inner life of this budding personality is vividly revealed in the newly published *Sonnets*, to which I shall advert in the following section. Further light is thrown upon these important years by a number of hitherto un-

known manuscripts that I have been privileged to examine. They appear now in print for the first time; my quotations are transcribed from the original documents. There are some fifteen short poems, including a stray version from the Italian and the German; there is a manuscript in foolscap folio of forty-four pages, numbered to 38, with the rest of the sheets bare, containing translations from the German of Heine, and signed "H. H. Ellis (1877–1879)"; the versions were completed on February 27, 1880, shortly after the boy had passed his twenty-first birthday. To 1878 belongs a translation from the French of Renan: *The Song of Songs* arranged as a drama, with an introduction by the translator. Introduction and Play fill a closely written foolscap folio of thirty-two pages. It may be remarked, in parenthesis, that the youthful handwriting of Ellis, like the thoughts set down in that hand, show a remarkable resemblance to the habit of the man today. Most important of all, however, are the *Notes*, dated July, 1878, but begun some four months later. Here, in fact, we have, in the earliest form, what was thirty-six years afterward to be inaugurated as the *Impressions & Comments*.[1]

All this material, whether from a foreign tongue or from the youth's own heart, is self-revelatory. The original poetry was not composed with thought of pub-

[1] The Miscellany at the end of this book contains a wealth of material in illustration of this section. The reader will find there selections from the translations of Heine's poetry; the *Song of Songs* by Renan, translated by Ellis, with the original Introduction written by the boy for his version; a number of original poems; the *Notes*, complete. I quote, in the text, only enough from the *Notes* to give point and continuity to my account.

lication; it seems more like a solacing self-communion, a brooding over soul and nature. There are, as we have seen, reminiscences of childhood affections. There are moments of that intense world-weariness which only adolescent youth may feel in all its mysterious gloom. To September of 1877 belongs *De Profundis,* written at Grafton, N.S.W.

My heart is sad, my strength is low,
My brain is tired and weak.
(*stanza never completed*)

Perhaps but for a moment's space
My soul within me faints,
To gaze at life's long upland race
And all the world's restraints.

To gaze at that cold path and pause,
And doubt what goal above,
To think of Nature's hard blind laws,
And all the want of love,

Of human love which, after all,
Perhaps may make us strong,
To cast off that which might enthrall,
And to battle with the wrong.

I do not know: the world's hard mould
In which we all abide,
Today may press with closer hold
The live warm soul inside.

Tomorrow this weak mood will go,
As born of passing cark,
And that mould something easier grow
Which bears the world's hall-mark.

YOUTH

I only know my heart is weak, —
  Too weak for passion even,
With scarcely life enough to seek
  For any joy-filled heaven.

Like a tired child, I fall and weep
  Upon life's path, and pray
For some divine, eternal Sleep
  To carry me away,

With passionless, calm-low bent face,
  Kiss me from this world's breast;
— Long and weary is life's race,
  And I desire to rest.

"Like a tired child." The verses betray the childhood and the weariness; yet, like all such lines from sensitive children, they indicate — even as dreams of oneself dying are said by analysts to indicate — the desire for new, fresh life rather than for the death that they seem to invoke. Ellis brooding over the grave is in reality Ellis preparing for a great and fruitful life.

In October of the following year, at Sparkes Creek, we find him setting down a tender song that reverts to the very time of his *De Profundis*. Unlike the girl of *Kanga Creek*, the lass of these lines was real.

TO ——

You often sang my favorite songs;
  I often liked to gaze
Upon your laughing soft brown eyes,
  Your little household ways.

The months passed on; the time arrived,
In warm October days,
To leave that sun-kissed fertile land
Of sugar-canes and maize.

And as the evening came whereon
The last farewells we bade;
The best-loved *Sonate Pathétique*
Once more for me you played.

At early morn we met and said
The very last goodbyes;
I looked down to your face and tears
Had leapt into your eyes.

And all along the grass-grown street
And through the quiet town,
In which my feet no more should tread,
And at the wharf, and down

The broad fair Clarence that I loved,
Your soft eyes still seemed near;
It was a joy to me to think
That I was worth a tear.

In marked contrast to such moods as these is a rare parody of Swinburne: *After the Diabolic School.* It was during Ellis's early days at Sparkes Creek that he was most drawn to Swinburne. The first series of *Poems and Ballads* and *Atalanta in Calydon* fanned high the flames of his admiration. Rapidly they then died down, giving way to a critical attitude that made the parody possible. One discovers but little humor in these Australian days of Ellis. Even his later humor is of that deeper variety

which gleams from eyes that have known tears rather than exploding from between red lips and shining teeth. I am inclined to find, in these lilting lines, more than a jot of the passion they travesty. The youth of twenty who penned these stanzas in purple ink is the same sober English lad who had been noting down, in his impressions of a year before, *The Hebraic Element in Swinburne*. He knew this poet of sea and sin in the round; the parody exhibits not only a metrical skill which is almost lacking in these early unpublished efforts, but a deep penetration into the psyche of the subject.

There are songs of the loves of the day-time
When the sun flecks the earth's green floor;
There are songs of the loves of the May-time
Filled full of youth's innocent lore;
Songs of the boys in the May-time
Who peep through life's wonderful door;
Songs of the loves in the play-time
Which was in the days no more.

O darling, O sweet my sister,
Not as theirs, not as theirs is our love;
Ours are the loves that blister,
Not ours the loves of the dove;
Ours are the loves that blister,
Loves glad with hell's fiery heat;
We saw Sin's face and we kissed her;
We kissed her and found her sweet.

Ah, darling, yes, sweet we found her;
More sweet than the sweet salt waves
Of the Western Atlantic around her
Green isles that she softly laves.

We clasped our arms tightly around her;
  Nor trembled nor let her go;
We may loose not the bonds that bound her
  For ever, — well, be it so.

We will go through the fair or foul weather,
  To hell's gate: — they will let us in;
We will go down softly together
  Mid the whirl and the smoke and the din.
We will go down softly together
  While the fiends mock and grin;
Though they howl to the end of their tether
  What care we — you and I and Sin?

I fear only lest Sin's face should sadden,
  And look not as it looked of old;
Not glad as of old it would gladden
  With a gleam of wine and of gold;
Not glad as of old it would gladden
  When our limbs throbbed fast and enlaced,
When the love into pain would madden
  With the flesh's bitter-sweet taste;

Lest when my teeth were yearning
  To taste of your body once more,
Sin with a damned face turning
  Fill my mouth with ashes or gore.
Ah, sister, ah, love, no turning
  For us for evermore;
Ah, sister, thy kisses are burning;
  — They will not be so any more.

The translations from Heine and Renan must have satisfied the youth in a double capacity. They were, in the

1893. Just After *The Nationalisation of Health*

EDITH AND HAVELOCK ELLIS

From a photograph about 1895

first place, an outlet for his deep, if unconventional and unacademic, instincts of scholarship. In the German lyrist, moreover, young Ellis found a kindred love and yearning, a kindred passion for the sea. It is a beautiful passage from *Prinzessin Ilsa* that the hero of *Kanga Creek* shouts into the ambient, companioning another from Swinburne. In Renan's reconstruction of the *Song of Songs* Ellis found not only a small yet worth-while opportunity for asserting himself as a student of the Scriptures, but in a people so wrongly accused of solely mercenary motives, also the deeper satisfaction of a pure, yet earthly presentation of passionate love. Among other manuscripts of this epoch are a translation, in blank verse, of de Musset's *Rolla*, and an analysis of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, done as an intellectual exercise out of admiration for the artistry of the poem.

It is in the *Notes*, however, that Ellis most reveals the intellectual travail of these important years, as distinguished from the emotional travail to be discovered in his poetry; in the *Notes*, and in an article first written in 1880, though not printed until two years later.

The *Notes*, consisting of short paragraphs set down in the form of a diary of ideas, begin on November 4, 1878, and continue until December 1 of that year. They deal now with concrete personalities, such as Swinburne, Shakespeare and Goethe, Goethe and Heine, Hosea, James Hinton; now with national traits (*e.g.*, *The Hebrew Genius*); now with metaphysical and theological abstractions, such as good and evil, God and sin; again, with scientific problems (*e.g.*, heredity) and, finally, with vast concepts such as Life and Genius. Already one notes the

cadences of a personal prose that suggests, in surprisingly great measure, the rhythms and nuances of the thought. Nothing could be farther from the style that ultimately developed out of this writing than that prosodic bastardy which has been called poetic prose. In Ellis a circle of expression finds its completion, as does more than one other circle of life. The elements of prose and poetry both are present, yet fuse in a harmony of expression that becomes his personal idiom. As an individual style this is to grow into an almost perfect instrument; not because it answers to rhetorical prescription, but precisely because it does not, — because it is the clear and radiant mirror of the projecting mind that fashions it out of chaos and contemplation.

The ideology at the bottom of the *Notes* is the same as that which provides the philosophic basis of the poems. This youth of nineteen or twenty is fast maturing an attitude and an aspiration. His intimate acquaintance with the Bible is matched by a thorough saturation with Shakespeare and a rare sense of Science as the true revelation. Already he is deeply responsive to the portrayal of women in sacred and secular literature. Already he has reached a personal definition of morality and of God, of good and evil. Already he has begun to join the arcs of thought and feeling into living circles. We find him relating Swinburne's imaginative spirit to that of the Hebrews, and discovering a resemblance between the passionate Englishman and Ezekiel, particularly because of their understanding of lust in women. He points out that Swinburne, in *Aholibah,* even paraphrased a passage in Ezekiel, though with indifferent outcome. That Ellis

should respond to what he calls Swinburne's "maenadic intoxication" of the sea was to be expected.

Consider this definition of Life, which Ellis underscored as he penned it; *Life is the effort of Nature to attain self-consciousness.*

In other notes he contrasts Shakespeare and Goethe (with incidental references to Tennyson) in a manner that reveals an inborn gift for analysis. He seems to be under the influence of a conception of genius as a cosmic teaching. "To compare, therefore, Tennyson and Swinburne as poets, we must place on one side the artistic, moral and sympathetic elements and when we have done so I find Swinburne a greater poet than Tennyson. But if we take Tennyson in his totality, I consider his genius is incomparably greater than Swinburne's. He is more than a poet; he is a teacher." So, at the end of this same entry, comparing Shakespeare and Goethe, he finds the Englishman a greater poet than Goethe. "But if we take Goethe in his totality, if we remember the extent and depth of his mind, his many-sidedness, and his vast significance for us as a teacher, remembering this I would say with little hesitation that Goethe was a greater genius than Shakespeare."

On the following day, however (October 11, 1878), he can rebel against the unruffled self-possession of a Goethe. "What has this calm-eyed self-possessed being in common with Catullus and Burns and Shelley? It is the upward yearning of a human soul, for ever going wrong and for ever striving to go right, and therefore human, and therefore to everyone the voice of his own soul — that is what I seek. And this is what I find in

Heine. He is no Goethe, no demi-god. Indeed, a man, 'cradled into poetry by wrong.' The cries of a soul grievously crushed in life's wine-press by the feet of sorrow and error and sin. And, therefore, — yes therefore, — so full of divine meaning, of sweetness, of infinite pathos, so full, to him whose own soul teaches him to see it, of love. This man truly is the brother of Sappho and Catullus and Villon, and Burns and Shelley and De Musset and Leopardi, youngest born among these glorious ones, not assuredly least."

For both meaning and manner the passage is significant. I seem to catch in these lines the tones and overtones of *The Dance of Life;* nor do they stand alone in these remarkable *Notes.* A short entry witnesses his independent reading of the Old Testament, in which he discovers more and more the traces of a sweetness and tenderness that have been conventionally obscured and denied. These came, indeed, to a "glorious flame in Christ of which we find no traces among Greeks or Romans. It is as unjust to speak of the Hebrew spirit as mainly stern, narrow, intolerant, as it is to say that the spirit of the nation which produced Chaucer and Shakespeare is merely Puritanic. David the Psalmist, Isaiah, 'Job,' 'Song of Songs,' Ruth, Ezekiel, Hosea, Philo, Christ, Paul, the Talmud (in which perhaps we find most of the spirit of Christ), Maimonides, Spinoza, Heine, — these were the men, these were the products, of a nation essentially stern, narrow and intolerant! "

The conception of science as true revelation, as the agency rather than the enemy of any valid religiousness, Ellis seems to have arrived at with the aid of Hinton.

In his note on *God*, the youth, characteristically, finds a "world full of infinite life" where the prosaic and orthodox have been able to see only dead matter. "And what has revealed this to us? Science. Science, that we received with so lukewarm a greeting. Science that we thought was to take from us all that was good and beautiful, — science has shown us *this*." Now, thus early, Ellis has proclaimed Hinton, in the *Notes*, as one of the most original thinkers of the century, with the chief merit that he was at the same time "a scientific and a religious thinker, — and that is a very rare combination indeed." As the young philosopher goes on to point out in an entry devoted to James Hinton, it is peculiar to that man's thinking that it is spiritual *because* it is scientific. In that underlined "*because*" we discover the young Ellis again at his favorite device of uniting supposed opposites, just as, in the previous note on Sin, we come upon an important, and similarly sharp-sighted, underlined passage: "*The man who has the greatest capacity for being better than other men is the man who has the greatest capacity for being worse than other men.*" The significance of this uniting of apparent opposites to the growing mind of Ellis stands out clearly in the very last entry of this set of *Notes*. "The world is full of apparent contradictions," he writes, "and every highest truth is the union of opposites." Thus early, Ellis has discovered the fundamental unity of existence and has adjusted his microcosmic self to the vast macrocosm. Here, I believe, are the roots of that equanimity, that "serene hilarity," which are to distinguish him in his fecund future. The *Notes* are completed with a sort of hymn:

It is, indeed, *Thy* world in which I live, O God! I know that the foul dream of evil is false; I know that it is false, and therefore I have strength to look upon the face of life, the marred and bleeding face of life, and therefore I strive to be among those who seek to pour into its wounds the oil and the wine; — that wonderful face of life, which has fascinated me with the terror and loveliness of it, because I know that it is indeed *Thy* face.

Is this a hymn to a personal God? I very much doubt it. It is, rather, if we keep in mind the youth's identification of spirit and science, the principle of cosmic unity. It is, rather, the signature to Ellis's unreligious, unorthodox, distinctly personal "conversion." In these lines we hear the opening notes of the prelude to the dance of Ellis's life.

In 1880 Henry H. Ellis, as he then signed his name, had completed his first formal prose article. It was not printed until 1882, when it appeared in the April issue of *Modern Thought*, a liberal monthly edited in London by John Charles Foulger. Admirably it crystallizes the calm passion and program of the twenty-one-year-old youth. He has, in truth, reached his majority. Here are two worlds of which he would make one, — a duality of which, characteristically, he would make an interpenetrating unity. I reprint the important article as it appeared in 1882.

THE TWO WORLDS

There are two worlds, one or other or both of which are always present to our consciousness. These are the ideal world

and the real world. But the impressions the one produces are not in harmony with those the other produces. And always these discords are paining us.

Naturally, in literature, in poetry, which is the language of our deepest and keenest impressions, we find these discords most clearly indicated. Poetry has brought before us the ideal world, and the ideal world almost exclusively. The poet has lived well-nigh always in the ideal. His eyes have been closed to the real, and our eyes also must be closed to the real world before we can hear what the poet has to tell us. But we know all the time that the real world is there. Till the poet shows us the real world we know that the half of our impressions yet remains to be expressed. That poet who shall fully satisfy us must bring before us in harmony the ideal world and the real world.

When we look at the poets of the past, one at least there seems to be who exercised equal and harmonious dominion over the ideal and the real. Our wonderful Shakspere here also does not fail us. His eyes, at all events, were not closed to the real world. Equally sensitive to the impressions of both, in him the two worlds join hands and sweep before us in perfect accord. But it must also be said that Shakspere is the poet of an age other than ours. The ideal world has turned round since then, more perhaps than we think, and the world that was real to him is to us simply another ideal world. And, also, our ideal has become larger and stronger and more distant from the real; and even our real world has, perhaps, grown more uncompromisingly real. So that the problem of reconciling the two not only requires to be solved afresh, but has also become indefinitely more difficult of solution.

Such being the case, we find, as we might expect, that our poets have ever more and more tended to leave the real world alone, thus giving still less and less satisfaction to a part of our nature which equally craves satisfaction.

Byron and Heine attract us as having been conscious of the conflicting claims of these two worlds. But Byron was not perfectly sincere, nor is he an adequate exponent of our modern feeling. What then of Heine? Heine has the most intense feeling for the actual world. He cannot sing of the ideal world for more than a few stanzas without the conflicting real world surging before him, with equally insistent demand for expression. This is so because he was more than a poet; he was a man striving for freedom, a thinker striving for free thought. He himself says he was not so much a poet as a soldier, fighting in the liberation-war of humanity. And, therefore, not only all the more a poet, but endowed also with all the pathos of the deepest humour. All this, note, from his profound sense of the real word, — a sense which must needs find an outlet in his poetry. And so there are two spirits in his poetry; the sweet ethereal spirit of the ideal world, and the straightforward, matter of fact, sometimes coarse, spirit of the real world. And so Heine expresses for us these two worlds. But he does not harmonise them. He had not the breadth and sweetness, the fulness of power of a Shakspere which could do that. Probably he never sought to harmonise them. And hence arises his irony; hence it is that so many people find Heine repulsive. He seems to them to desecrate that ideal world which alone they consider sacred. We know that it is not so; that Heine is but witnessing to the need every man of wide sympathies feels to express the whole of his being. And yet this apparent repulsiveness, the irony, and even the humour of Heine bear witness that he has failed to find the harmonious expression for these two worlds.

Let us then turn to a living poet — a poet who comes before us in this connection, but has for the rest little kinship with Heine. Walt Whitman has all the masculine breadth and power, the full sympathy, the abounding healthfulness that Heine wanted. M. Taine has said characteristically that in such men as Shakspere,

and Rabelais, and Rubens sensibility of nerve was balanced by solidity of muscle, but that now genius is a disease. Heine illustrates the latter part of this remark, Walt Whitman scarcely less admirably the former. There is an almost colossal largeness, a coarse healthfulness, a hearty world-embracing sympathy about Walt Whitman which unites him to such men as Rabelais and Rubens. And yet we hear sometimes in his verse, if verse it may be called, such outbursts of lyric song, sad and keen and sweet, as Heine himself has scarcely surpassed. Indeed, there are in Walt Whitman, as Mr. Swinburne has happily remarked, two beings, a poet nature and a prose nature. In other words, he also is striving to give expression to the two worlds. And, unlike Heine, he appears unconscious of the discord existing between them. Heine sees this discord, and sometimes it goads him to madness, and he cries out in agony, and sometimes it gives him all the breadth and sadness of Shakspere's profoundest humour. But not even Wordsworth is more deficient in humour than Walt Whitman. Perhaps it is because he is so purely a poet, and not, like Heine, a representative modern man, and therefore much beside a poet, that Walt Whitman is so little of a humourist. His large strong sympathetic nature, with a sensibility broad rather than refined, fails to note the discords which are palpable to smaller men. But in return he sees what it is above all things necessary to see. He sees that nothing is too ordinary, too commonplace, to be beyond the loving touch, the truthful word of the poet. He is persuaded that there is nothing common or unclean. And this he is bold to iterate. Paul said the same in the language of the first century. That language has become somewhat unintelligible now, and to the man who says it in the language of the nineteenth, a measure of contempt and obloquy must be meted.

It is to this — which, if we knew, is one of Walt Whitman's greatest claims on our esteem — that we most attribute the slight

attention, the absolute contempt even, with which so remarkable a manifestation has as yet, on the whole, been received. For when we seriously face the genius of Walt Whitman, we must confess that it is a remarkable manifestation. We are confronted on the one hand by such marvellous and subtle, such exquisitely modulated snatches of song as in the poem Mr. Rossetti has entitled "Sea-shore Memories"; and, on the other hand, we meet, side by side with these outbursts, pages of jerky, unattached clauses, long list of names, which seem to the reader to belong to the crudest and most unregenerate prose. I say "seem," for I think that to the writer himself these long lists which the reader often finds so dreary are as rich with association and charm, as instinct with emotional life, as the names Milton loved to link together, the —

> "Meroe, Nilotic isle and more to west,
> The realm of Bacchus and the Blackmoor Sea;
> From the Asian Kings and Parthians, among these,
> From India and the golden Chersonese,
> And utmost Indian isle Taprobane."

and so on. In any case there remains this significant fact, that here is a writer whose work is by turns intensely poetic and (virtually at all events) intensely prosaic. Like Heine, Walt Whitman witnesses to the fact that only a two-fold representation of life can satisfy the varied needs of the human soul; that that expression which only can come to us as complete must recognise, equally and harmoniously, the ideal world and the real world.

I said that Heine, keenly as these two worlds pressed upon him, was unable to harmonise them even for himself. Walt Whitman can see no discord between them; to him they are perfectly harmonious, and that is why he is so little of a humourist. But has he succeeded in making them harmonious for us?

I think not. Taking into consideration the fact that he is, to

a large extent, outside of the great currents of modern thought and feeling — advantageous though this is in many respects — as well as the peculiar want of adaptation he so constantly exhibits, and, above all, the fatal lack of humour; taking all this into consideration, we shall find that that for which we look Walt Whitman, great and significant as his genius is, will not give us.

While, therefore, we recognise the service that Heine and Walt Whitman have done towards bringing to us that great harmony, we know that the work is not done yet, and that we still look for the master-soul who, with hands loving and true, and insight broad and clear, shall, with fulness of knowledge, gather up for us into one expression the poetry and the prose of life. And that so the ideal world and the real world shall be reconciled. And can it be that we look in vain?

Ellis, asking that great question — and he has asked of Life more than one beautiful question that was almost in itself a reply — has at the same moment begun to write the answer. In this very article he has begun, with loving hands and true, to gather up into one expression the poetry and the prose of life, — to gather it, not on the written or printed page merely, but in the harvest of wide and deep living.

IV

There is a certain symbolism in the publication dates of *Kanga Creek* and *Sonnets & Folk Songs*. Publishing these youthful writings in the ripeness of his age, our foremost living exemplar of the youth of the spirit renews the youth of his own spirit. Giving the poems out in 1925, Ellis thus fulfilled, more than four times over,

the Horatian precept to let one's writings lie nine years unpublished. Presenting them to the public at last, he did so, I am sure, more to complete a record than to gratify a vanity. There is a sense in which Ellis, whatever he has undertaken, has never been anything but a poet. Not even in the scientific pages of his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* does the poetic overtone go long unheard. Speaking of himself in the Preface to the poems, he says that possibly he "has never been a properly prosaic writer of prose — except maybe in the matter of clarity — because from the age of twelve he had learnt to write chiefly in the medium of verse. But while the other forms of verse have been excluded,[1] all the sonnets the author ever completed, even the first attempts, have wisely or otherwise, been here reproduced, with the result that there is much inequality of achievement. One begins with one's head full of the songs of the masters of old; one has brooded over them in silence, one has shouted them aloud in solitary walks, they have recurred to memory with a sudden thrill of delight amid the occupations of the day. So that when one begins one's own song it is at first mixed with the echoes, conscious and unconscious, of those who had gone before, and one merely attains a smooth conventionality which fails to express the form of one's own thought. Then, a little later, one sees that the masters of old, however great, have not presented one's own self, and therewith one's work begins instinctively to take the shape, even if more rugged, of one's own soul."

[1] Most of the "other forms of verse" are to be found in the text of this book, or in the Miscellany.

Here, in so many words, is a modest, yet firm, declaration of independence, significantly at variance with the ill-mannered, wild-phrased manifestoes that used to proceed sporadically from the headquarters of so many "young" movements. But then, Ellis is one of that rare few who in their youth write like old men, and in their age, like youth. In these poems one misses the passionate gaucherie of the adolescent — the merely sensuous, the braggadocio of word and gesture. The lines are compact of sober thought and mounting aspiration. Some of the poems were intended to form part of a series to be called *Life & The Soul*, "being certain things that the Soul said to Life" and bearing the motto: "The Life is more than meat, and the Body than raiment," since, as Ellis goes on to say, "it seemed to the youthful author when he looked around the world in which he lived — and might it not have so seemed to the youth even today — that all, even the so-called leaders of men, were merely occupied with 'meat' and with 'raiment' — with the material conditions of life and the external conditions of morality — and that no one was seeking to grasp the actual naked and essential facts of human existence. . . ."

His poems, as I have said, prefigure the career of Havelock Ellis. His later life translates these lines into living. All the significant themes are here, often couched in terms of exquisite concision. Take the earliest of the sonnets — lines written in July, 1876, in Australia. The sonnet lacks its thirteenth line; its title is a word almost as common as the word LIFE which, as Ellis remarks in considering his poems, "here became a large symbol with

a significance peculiar to the writer." In his own life, Beauty, too, has become such a large symbol:

BEAUTY

Our souls stretch forth into the Infinite,
Striving in vain, to realize and clasp
The Beauty we but see. We cannot grasp
The setting sun's last burst of glorious light;
Alas, it gives us more of pain than pleasure.
And a lip's curved loveliness rounded sweet
Still, still eludes us; leaving us defeat,
Making us sick and faint in the endeavor,
Like the magnolia's perfume. So our souls
Fall weary back from these aspiring flights,
Content to worship at a humbler shrine,
Amid the common round [1] of daily joys,

. . . . . .

The common round — not therefore less divine.

Here, in epitome, is a beautiful life. Re-read that last line and behold in it one of the pivotal convictions of the man to whom these poems are the child-father. Not for Ellis the morbid "beauty" of those romantics who seek it in an impossible universe — that romantic spirit which lies, as he says in the Third Series of *Impressions and Comments*, "in seeking after a beauty the world cannot hold and in failing to see the beauty it really holds." No accident is it that the man who, more than any other living philosopher, has made of life an art, should be also the man who has based his findings upon a calm, detached, scientific study of the psychology of sex. The sentimen-

[1] This "common round," Ellis tells me, seems an echo of Keble.

tal romantic, blind to the beauty of the real world, afraid of it, takes refuge in a sickly simulacrum. An Ellis, discovering beauty even where others find only ugliness, builds his airiest castles upon a foundation of rugged reality. "The common round — not therefore less divine." Man is alike his own God and his own Devil. The same commingling of humanity with divinity we find in the sonnet to Shakespeare; its opening lines, incidentally, are among the weakest in the Ellis collection.

SHAKESPEARE

Among the foremost of the world's great sages,
Like the blue sky he stands embracing all,
With perfect art embracing large or small,
So that he voiced the senses of all the ages;
His spirit was no star content to shine
Apart, spurning the works of earth which brings
Earth's cheerfulness; he mixed with common things
And men, leading the daily life divine.

So that I sometimes think that Nature vast,
Less hard than when Actoean's bones of old
Grew white amid Mount Cythoeson's wintry blast,
Clothed herself with a human soul, to bless
Man with the sight, gazing with awe untold
Of all her naked unveiled loveliness.

The greatness which we truly see in others is but an image, however magnified, of our aspiring lesser selves. See how Ellis, as a boy of seventeen, discovers in Shakespeare those very qualities for which his own life's labors

are to be noted, — the blend of sky and earth, the "daily life divine."

There are more ecstatic moments when a sort of rational mysticism (devoid of theological connotations, despite his vocabulary) invades his soul. Here, for example, is his

SONNET IN BLANK VERSE

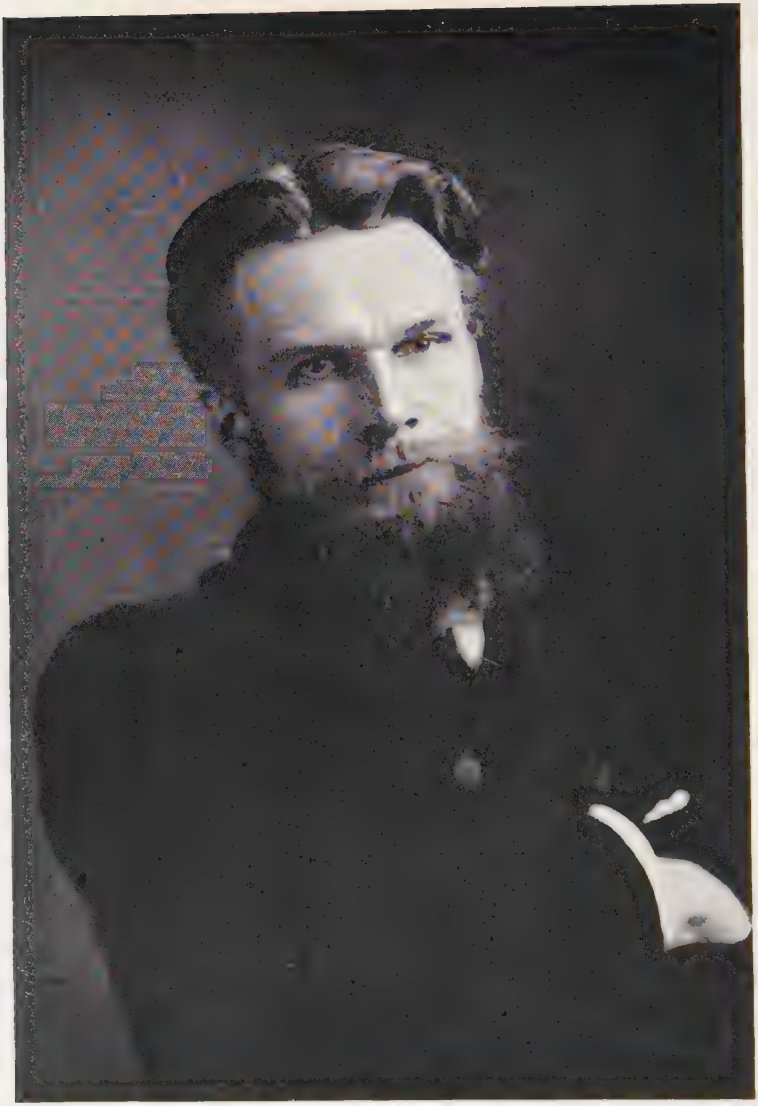
In truth I think that we are very fools,
And blind and deaf, in truth, that we should live
Within this large fair world with sealèd eyes
And closed-up ears, constructing, each of us,
Around his ego, a poor miniature world
Which is not; seeing not and hearing not
Sounds sweet beyond all sweetness, loveliness
Beyond all love, brief sudden gleams of all things,
In the great world that is.

O God! O God!
Thou Light, Thou Love, Thou Loveliness, Thou all!
The joy, the joy, borne on the throbbing waves,
O universal sum of soul, O God,
Of Thee! To lose ourselves to find ourselves
In music of the surging of that sea!

This poem dates back to August, 1878. Writing to Ellis, some six years later, with reference not to his poetry but to his diary, Olive Schreiner said: "I must have a long talk with you some day (perhaps in a letter) on your use of the word 'God' and the old symbols generally. The use of them by people like you and me is

THE COUNT HOUSE, CHYANWEAL, CARBIS BAY, CORNWALL

Occupied from 1894 for some thirteen or fourteen years [illegible] the shorter woman



In 1896, Just After *Man and Woman* and Just Before the Appearance of the First Volume of the Sex Studies

never quite true." She was, of course, right. Strange, indeed, that only unbelievers should really know what it means, and that it should represent least to those who have it most upon their sanctimonious tongues. Note, again, how Ellis's most rapturous flights never take him too far from that earth which to him is heaven as well. He dwells from the days of his youth, not on a Utopian cloud, but "in the great world that is." Note, too, the symbol of the sea, which recurs so often in these poems. Contrast the closing lines with the famous poem written by Leopardi on a hilltop of Italy (I quote Bickersteth's sensitive version):

THE INFINITE

Always dear to me was this lonely hill,
Ay, and this hedge that from so broad a sweep
Of the ultimate horizon screens the view.
But as I sit and gaze, my fancy feigns
Space beyond space upon the further side,
And silence within silence past all thought,
Immeasurable calm; whereat well nigh,
Groweth the heart afraid. And as I hear
The wind sough thro' these thickets, then between
That everlasting silence and this voice
I make comparison; and call to mind
The Eternal, and the ages dead, and this
The living present, and its clamour. So
In this immensity my thought is drowned:
And sweet to me is shipwreck in this sea.

Leopardi here achieves serenity by surrender; it is a beautiful surrender, to be sure, and one that has been

felt by all creatures predestined to an overkeen sensitivity. Ellis achieves his serenity on the other hand, by a vast embrace, losing a small self to find a greater. To use his favorite simile of earth's waters, one can imagine his deep personality as a placid lake into which are hurled, like pebbles from some mischievous, boyish hand, the problems of the universe. Ultimately, of course, the pebble sinks to the silent bottom; but not before it has stirred into life a beautiful series of ever-widening concentric circles.

This unity of what men call divine, with what men call human, is one of the main themes of that symphony which has been Ellis's life. In these poems it keeps recurring like a cosmic motif. A sonnet, written in London during May of 1879, a few weeks after he had returned from Australia, speaks of roving apart from men through solitary Nature, feeding his heart with dreams. But these are not enough, and

> . . . now I know
> That kiss or touch of human lip or hand
> Is far diviner yet than these, more grand
> The world of men and women. So at length
> I see things as they are and yet have hope;
> I go into the world with joy and strength;
> And there alone my spirit finds its scope.

Such a sense of reality is remarkable indeed for the oldest and wisest of men; look about you in the world today and discover how few there are who share it with Ellis. In a youth, that sense is uncanny. God, having left the sky, dissolves into humankind; Ellis, having left heaven for earth, merges his being with the sea of hu-

manity. Here is the sea of his *Sonnet in Blank Verse;* here he finds himself, as on a day when he wrote his poem *In The Strand:*

> Faces I see, as through the street I go,
> Scarred by disease and sin that burn like fire,
> And eyes with cold dead light of base desire,
> Thin lips sucked in by self-absorption so
> One scarce can tell if they are human or no,
> Boys whose young candour dies within this mire,
> Silly girl-faces that are fair for hire,
> And over all a mesh of lies.
>
> I know
> How taint of blood, gold-worship, passion's tide
> Curse of self-seeking, loveliness of hell,
> Do mould men's forms for ever, as a glove
> Is moulded by the living hand inside;
> All this, I say, I know, and know as well,
> I never knew a heart I might not love.

Ellis is not, as we have seen, "religious"; to most of the preaching fraternity who have ever ventured far enough into literature to have heard of him, he is anathema; yet show me a lip-servant whose business it is to prate on the Sabbath of universal brotherhood, who has ever felt that exaltation so truly and lived it so beautifully.

I should here remark, parenthetically, that Ellis feels, personally, not the smallest hostility to those whom I — with less reverence — have named the preaching fraternity. Indeed, many preachers, as well as opposing free-thinkers, are warmly sympathetic to his work; very evidently he has touched a core of life to which they respond

from sources that are deeper than the planes of their differences. Among the noted preachers stand Dr. Inge, Dean of St. Paul's; among the others, Powys Mathers, translator of the *Arabian Nights.*

To return to the sonnet: the octet prefigures clearly the psychological and psychopathic studies with which Ellis was to enrich our knowledge of the sexes; the sestet asserts passion for that humanity which has so often disgusted and amused him. Perhaps his peculiar withdrawal was early tinctured with the youth's shyness; it may be even a vast sublimation of it, just as, regarded from a different point of view, that shyness and its ambivalent curiosity may have played a great part in directing his attention to sexual studies. Olive Schreiner, from the first, in writing her whole-souled letters to him, comments upon his unreadiness to reveal himself. "Yes, you never look anyone in the face, eh? I couldn't understand it at first. I think that what I called that glorious look in your eyes was just the *once* or *twice* when you looked really into mine. They were godlike. What is rather funny is that some years ago I never looked at anyone in the eyes." That was in 1884; some two years later, when their friendship has become rarely intimate, she is still twitting him on his excess of reserve. "You tell me so little about yourself, horrible old cat, and you aren't writing a big novel!" Again, early in 1888: "*You,* of all people I ever met . . . are a man of the study. You are perfectly dead on the other side. That is your weakness and your strength." Here, surely, she was not altogether right. Two years later, despite a most unconventionally candorous, uninterrupted correspond-

ence, the brave, passionate, lonely Olive is singing the same refrain: "I am a great smoker now. You see I tell you all things about myself and you tell me nothing." [1] Olive Schreiner touched the truth of the matter when

[1] In Ellis's *A Study of British Genius* there is a passage that may be recalled in connection with these traits. It is, indeed, interesting to go through this — one of the least personal and most purely statistical of his books — and compare his findings with his known characteristics. The passage:

"In regard to the mental and emotional disposition of British persons of genius, the national biographers enable us to trace the prevalence of one or two tendencies. One of these is shyness, bashfulness or timidity. This is noted in sixty-eight cases, while fifty are described as very sensitive, nervous, or emotional, and, although this is not equivalent to a large percentage, it must of course be remembered that the real number of such cases is certainly very much larger, and also that the characteristic is in many cases extremely well marked. Some had to abandon the profession they had chosen on account of their nervous shyness at appearing in public; others were too bashful to declare their love to the women they were attracted to; Sir Thomas Browne, one of the greatest masters of English prose, was so modest that he was always blushing causelessly; Hooker, one of the chief luminaries of the English Church, could never look any one in the face; Dryden, the recognized prince of literary men of his time, was, said Congreve, the most easily put out of countenance of any man he had ever met. It is not difficult to see why the timid temperament, — which is very far from involving lack of courage, — should be especially associated with intellectual aptitudes. It causes a distaste for social contact and so favours those forms of activity which may be exerted in solitude, these latter, again, reacting to produce increased awkwardness in social relations. Moreover, the mental state of timidity, which may be regarded as a mild form of *folie du doute*, a perpetual self-questioning and uncertainty, however unpleasant it may be from the social point of view, is by no means an unsatisfactory attitude in the face of intellectual problems, for it involves that unceasing self-criticism which is an essential element of all good intellectual work, and has marked more or less clearly the greatest men of scientific genius. Fundamentally, no doubt, timidity is a minor congenital defect of the nervous mechanism, fairly comparable to stammering. It may be noted that the opposite characteristic of over self-confidence, with more or less tendency to arrogance and insolence, is also noted, but with much less frequency, and usually in men whose eminence is not due to purely intellectual qualities."

she likened Ellis to a cross between a Christ and a faun; here is yet another ambivalence that may be seen in his pictures as in his writings, even as it may be seen in the pictures and the writings of a partly kindred spirit, Remy de Gourmont.

There is, in Ellis, a rebel as well as a recluse; his rebellion is the fruit of that deeper penetration — rather than escape — which his reclusion symbolizes. But how different is his revolt from that angular aridity bred so often by organized opposition! In him none of the humorless thumping of the propagandist; none of the shallow reasoning toward a pre-determined goal; none of the epidermical emotionalism of the sentimental. A remarkable balance of faculties preserves in him a radiant sanity.

It was the rebel in him that dictated the sonnet to Sophia Perovskia, who was executed on the 16th of April, 1881:

She would not share the lot of those who make
The world a nest of ills; she gladly met
The thorns of that strange crown, their guerdon yet,
Who of Life's bread of freedom dare to break,
And pour Life's wine that after men partake;
And having laboured to redeem the debt
The ages owed, ay, not till she had set
A Czar towards death, she died for Life's sweet sake.

Heroes and martyrs love and suffer still:
As flashes from earth's smithy they are hurled
About the sky to lighten darkest nights.
This has been so for ever, and ever will
When on the anvil of the grief-worn world
God lays the human mighty heart and smites.

The quality of this youthful rebellion, which dates back to 1883, is such that it emphasizes, not the inhumanity of the tyrant, but the immolation of the girl who executed upon him the judgment of a world. There is no hangman in Ellis. As Sophia Perovskia died, so he lives, "for Life's sweet sake." And Life, such as he visions it, requires as much courage to face as does Death. He has met them both and conquered them through an understanding that is an embrace. Often the symbol is woman, — woman to whom, as his wife has told us, he "owes the best that is in him." Such a woman is it that in a flashing moment reveals herself as the sum of Life, and its remainder, — Death. The later sonnet, *Notre Dame De La Place Blanche*, is the *carpe diem*, not of a rose-gathering Herrick, but of a philosopher with arms that can hold roses as well as rue.

Strong curves of flanks, large thighs, and feet that pace,
With regal walk, on unknown errand sped,
I note her simple dress, her naked head,
Her fair large body, free and open face
Filling with light this light and open space,
And with coquettish tender eyes she greets
And takes the arm of the slender lad she meets,
And looks down on him with her queenly grace.

This is the woman that God made of old,
As trees and flowers, the joy of earth to man.
She has no soul and she is glad and bold,
No cord has bound her and she thinks none can.
To-morrow's refuse she will likely be:
To-day she is this bright strong thing we see.

If I may put it so, Ellis the poet sings, not the youth of the body but the youth of the soul. There is sensuousness aplenty, yet it is not, as in so much immature verse, the be-all of the rhymes. It takes, as so rarely in the poetry of youth, its wholesome place between the earth and the sky. That place, as we shall see, it has kept in deep and varied career. If I quote generously from these youthful verses it is not to insinuate any lofty opinion of them as poetic art. They are important, chiefly, as documentary evidence of a poeticality that is to irradiate the life of the man.

CHAPTER FIVE

London — Medical Studies — "Fellowship of the New Life" — Olive Schreiner — Paris

I

AUSTRALIA, which brought to Ellis the vital sense of his relationship to the rest of creation, animate as well as inanimate, was likewise the scene of the fashioning of his career. First came adjustment to the cosmos; then, to the business and the art of living. It was at Sparkes Creek, when he was nineteen, that the idea of studying medicine first occurred to him. He had already adumbrated his scheme for the working out of the sex problem, but there had been no thought of medical studies as a necessary preliminary. One evening, as he lay reading on his back, on one of the hard forms of his lonely little schoolroom, he came upon the passage in Ellice Hopkins's *Life and Letters of James Hinton* wherein is chronicled the resolve of that ardent and free-ranging soul to study medicine. Like a flash it came over Ellis that this, too, was what he must do. He leapt up from the bench as if an electric shock had passed through him. From that moment the issue was decided. Here he was, without money, without any special aptitude for the profession, and certainly without any particular de-

sire to earn his living in such a way. What had flashed upon him was the need of a biological foundation for the work that he had chosen as one of his major interests. As it proved, that training was absolutely essential. As soon as it should serve its purpose, he was to abandon it.

Strange, that James Hinton should have played so great a rôle in the lives of both Edith and Havelock Ellis. A life of Hinton by one woman (whose first name, peculiarly enough, is pronounced like Ellis's last) was to be the spark that touched off his medical studies. A life of Hinton by Mrs. Edith Ellis was to be the last book that she wrote.[1] It was in 1882 that he had written his pair of sonnets entitled *A Pioneer;* that pioneer was James Hinton:

I

A world where impulse, art, joy, pain combine:
  Impulse as guide to every act well done;
  Art as the way; joy, pain drunk glad from one
Great sacramental chalice of all life's wine;
O prophet soul, among those now to shine
  Who see the victory lost as victory won,
  Near his swift eager soul that had outrun
Even Shelley's spirit of flame — this sight was thine!

At length we see thy vision and are strong
  To yearn with thee, O seer, from out the night;
We lend our work to this, our thought, our song;
  Nor will we cease henceforth from mortal fight
Until athwart the cloven shades of wrong
  Heaven's fields stand fair at last beneath this light.

[1] Not, however, the last to be published. See, at the back of this book, the Bibliography of Mrs. Ellis's writings.

II

An awful angel met thee by the way:
  Divinely mad, alone among the throng,
  We found thee wrestling with the world's vast wrong.
No more to be the sophist that men say,
Nerved by that struggle, able to obey
  The law of love and freedom; so belong
  Insight and hope to thee which make men strong:
Thou shalt prevail at breaking of the day.

And, lo, now that thy strength no more is hurled
  On earth's old wrong, thy light's the lovelier shed;
Thy dream doth weave itself across the world
  To sweeten by its sight our daily bread;
And all thy passion is a flag unfurled,
  O trumpet soul that callest from the dead!

By this token, as by more than one other, Ellis, back in London and enrolled as a student at St. Thomas's Hospital, has not utterly abandoned Erato for Aesculapius and Galen.[1] Nor has he forgotten his early musical enthusiasms. As a youth, indeed, Ellis was musical enough to find in the piano a certain emotional relief. We have his own testimony that he played badly, but Beethoven's Sonatas were often at his finger tips. More; although,

[1] It is interesting to recall that among the great English writers who studied at St. Thomas's was John Keats. In Keats's day the building was a small, confined place; today it is an imposing structure along the Thames, facing the Houses of Parliament. "I occasionally passed many famous men in the streets", writes Ellis (in a letter dated November 26, 1925). "I had no opportunity of looking up the Keats records. He was a diligent student, and passed through his medical course (a very simple one in his days) much more rapidly than I did, for I was dissipating my energies on all the things in the universe."

out of dissatisfaction with his playing, he gave up the piano at eighteen, it was not before he had made some attempts at writing music. Ignorance of the scientific substructure was no deterrent to his eagerness; in this, indeed, he could easily have found a precedent in the lives of some of our greatest composers. His sonnet, *The Unfinished Symphony*, was not written until 1883, but it throws direct light upon the meaning of music to his formative years. Inspired by the famous fragment of Schubert, it speaks none the less for the art of Music itself.

I shudder at the awful airs that flow
  Across my soul; I hear crushed hopes that wail,
  And flutter their brief wings, and sudden fail,
Wild tender cries that sing and dance and go
In wonderful sweet troops. I cannot know
  What rends within my soul what unseen veil,
  And tells anew what strangely well-known tale
Of infinite gladness and of infinite woe.

Was I long since thrust forth from Heaven's door
  Where in that music I had borne my part?
Or had this symphony its birth before
  The pulse of Nature turned to laws of Art?
O what familiar voice, from what far shore,
  Calls to a voice that answers in my heart?

Even here, poet, musician, mystic, psychologist and biologist achieve a harmonious blend of a ripening personality. Recall, too, that the hero of the partly biographical novel, *Kanga Creek*, is a meditative youth who shouts poetry to the winds and has a passion for music.

II

Ellis had returned, in 1881. There was a short interlude during which he served as assistant master in a school at Smithwick near Birmingham. The England to which he came back was about to be plunged into an era of socialistic reform movements. The tranquility of Britain in 1882, as Mr. Pease has insinuated,[1] was a sort of calm before the storm. George Eliot had died late in 1880; Darwin had died in April of 1882; Karl Marx followed in March of 1883. The deaths of both Darwin and Marx had passed all but unnoticed. The working classes were modestly, but firmly, raising their voices. Positivism and Comte were in the air. Factory conditions were beginning to claim attention. Social questions were gropingly finding their way into politics. "The political parties," says Pease, in a paragraph that may hold true for Ellis and his subsequent activities in the pioneer societies, "therefore offered very little attraction to the young men of the early eighties, who, viewing our social system with the fresh eyes of youth, saw its cruelties and its absurdities and judged them, not as older men, by comparison with the worse cruelties and greater absurdities of earlier days, but by the standard of common fairness and common sense, as set out in the lessons they had learned in their schools, their universities, and their churches."

Ellis, fresh from his southern loneliness, big with a lofty idealism that was about to be strengthened and balanced by a thorough medical training, would naturally be drawn into the agitation. In his own quiet way, of

[1] *The History of the Fabian Society.* By Edwin R. Pease. London, A. C. Fifield. (No date.) The Preface is dated January, 1916.

course, yet none the less surely if placidly. Spencer, Huxley, Whitman, Henry George, Mill, Ruskin, T. H. Green, — these were the human banners under which the sensitive youth of the era was enlisting, though most of them had little or no influence on Ellis. It is significant that none of the original Fabians, as Mr. Pease recalls, had read Marx's *Das Kapital* or assimilated its ideas at the time the Society was formed. These young men did not propose to follow; they meant to lead.

One might, with a knowledge of his previous history, have predicted that Ellis would not incline toward those groups which emphasized the economic and political aspects of reform. Not that he flouted them so much as that he believed them subordinate to the development of the individual. It was in 1881 that Ellis came across *Modern Thought*, getting speedily into touch with the editor, publisher and printer, a young and eager, progressively-minded spirit, J. C. Foulger. Foulger, it seems, eventually drifted into journalism on the staff of the London *Daily Mail*. In the budding days of English socialistic thought, however, he managed, through his magazine, to rally around him a number of writers who were later to become well known. It was Foulger, too, who seems to have been chiefly responsible for the idea of the *Progressive Association*, which was formed some time in 1882. The committee meetings were held in his office and the organization itself was an anticipatory manifestation of Socialism in England. It had no economic theory, however, emphasizing the moral basis exclusively; historically, perhaps, the effort should be classed with the various types of Christian Socialism which contained elements

neither Christian nor Socialistic. When Socialism in its own right entered the field, the Progressive Association faded out of the picture.

The Progressive Association was "Established for the Promotion of Intellectual and Social Well-being." Its first care was "to bring about that moral awakening which is itself the occasion of all political and social improvement." The secretary was Percival Chubb, who now heads the Ethical Church of St. Louis, Mo. Ellis was on the Executive Committee, and was for some time secretary, organizing the meetings and making the unpleasant winter's evening journey from his home across London, to be present every week. Among the members of the General Committee were William Clarke, George Jacob Holyoake, Mrs. James Hinton, G. Cotter Morrison, Frank Podmore and William Sharp.

The Association held meetings on Sundays, which were addressed by lecturers of greater or less renown. The course of procedure was the now familiar one of music, singing by the audience, lecture and questions from the floor. A William Sharp, a William Morris, a Thomas Davidson, would on occasion make the meeting memorable. The general atmosphere must then have been what it is even today in similar societies: that of a secularized church. The plan, consciously or unconsciously, seems to have grown out of the music and sermon of the church; it has been used, since, and not too successfully, as a subtle manner of winning back adherents to the temple. The temper of the Progressive Association, however, is clearly shown by its desire for a hymnal that should be free from all theological elements. (Again one notes the retention

of the ecclesiastical form after the abandonment of its substance.) No such hymn book being then in existence, Ellis was commissioned to compile one in which the word "God" should not occur. Accordingly the first edition appeared in 1884,[1] as *Hymns of Progress:* "So far as the compilers are aware, no collection of songs similar in design to this little book exists at present in the English language; a collection, that is to say, neither directly founded on theological conceptions, nor yet directly antagonistic to such conceptions, but dealing solely with the largest and simplest aspects of human life, human love, human hope." For this collection Ellis even wrote a hymn of his own:

Onward, brothers, march still onward,
Side by side and hand in hand,
Ye are bound for man's true kingdom,
Ye are an increasing band.

Though the way seem often doubtful,
Hard the toil which ye endure,
Though at times your courage falter,
Yet the Promised Land is near.

Olden sages saw it dimly,
And their joy to madness wrought;
Living men have gazed upon it,
Standing on the hills of thought.

All the past has done and suffered,
All the daring and the strife,
All has helped to mould the future,
Make man master of his life.

[1] A second edition, revised and enlarged in the light of experience, appeared in 1888.

Still brave deeds and kind are needed,
Noble thoughts and feelings fair;
Ye too must be strong and suffer,
Ye too have to do and dare.

Onward, brothers, march still onward,
March still onward hand in hand;
Till ye see at last Man's Kingdom,
Till ye reach the Promised Land.

It found its way into many an English and American Socialist collection, and even into regular songbooks for congregational singing. He has often playfully said that when all his other activities shall have been forgotten he will still be remembered by his hymn of the onward marching fraternity.

Meantime other groups were claiming Ellis's interest. In 1883 Thomas Davidson had come to London and held a number of little meetings of young people, to whom he introduced his ideas of a Vita Nuova, or a Fellowship of the New Life. Mr. Chubb, whom we have already met as the young secretary of the Progressive Association, was the English organizer of the new, as yet inchoate, Fellowship. The first formal meetings were held at the lodgings of Mr. Edward R. Pease, then a member of the London Stock Exchange. The minute book of the initial meeting, which was held on October 24, 1883, lists the following as present:[1] Miss Ford, Miss Isabella Ford

[1] For information about the Fellowship of the New Life, see Mr. Pease's *History of the Fabian Society*, already referred to, and also Mr. Edward Carpenter's Preface to Edith Ellis's *The New Horizon in Love and Life*, London, A. & C. Black. 1921. (In the United States, Macmillan.)

(of Leeds), Mrs. Hinton (widow of James Hinton), Miss Haddon (her sister), Mr., Mrs. and Miss Robins, Maurice Adams, H. H. Champion, Percival A. Chubb, H. Havelock Ellis, J. L. Joynes, Edward R. Pease, Frank Podmore, R. B. P. Frost, and Hamilton Pullen.

It should be noted, in this connection, that Mr. Pease was not in the movement at its beginning. Chubb, who was at that period an enthusiastic admirer of Davidson, and was in touch with him before he arrived, brought together a few friends, among them Ellis, to meet the leader. There had first been a series of informal meetings at Chubb's rooms. Davidson seems to have drawn to Ellis from the first, cultivated his society and evidently counted on making him a personal disciple. As time went on, however, Davidson realized that despite Ellis's apparent receptivity he yet remained in reality completely unimpressionable to the master's fervid eloquence. Finally, not long after the Fellowship was constituted, Davidson wrote to Ellis from Rome in a veritable explosion of anger, renouncing all further correspondence with him.

The record of Ellis's relations with the wandering scholar is to be found in Professor Knight's *Memorials of Thomas Davidson.*[1] Mr. Knight, however, is wrong in his statement that Ellis knew Davidson intimately. "Far from it; I always felt I did not know him at all. But apart from the fact that he stimulated the promotion of the little group of us out of which the Fabian Society developed he was one of the most remarkable men I have ever met. He liked to have young men disciples

[1] Boston and London, 1897.

around him. . . . I was not really attracted to him or to the metaphysical doctrine he preached." [1] That doctrine, as Ellis described it in Professor Knight's book, "may be stated in a few words, as the absolute necessity of founding practical life on philosophical conceptions; of living a simple, strenuous, intellectual life, so far as possible communistically, and on a basis of natural religion. It was Rosminianism, one may say, carried a step further." The chief effect of Davidson upon Ellis, however, was to confirm him in his philosophical independence. As Ellis wrote for Mr. Knight's compilation:

> He failed to make me a disciple, but he taught me a lesson I have never since unlearned. Before I met him I thought that philosophical beliefs could be imparted, and shared; that men could, as it were, live under the same metaphysical dome. Davidson enabled me to see that a man's metaphysics, if genuinely his, is really a most intimate part of his own personal temperament; and that no one can really identify himself with another's philosophy, however greatly he may admire it, or sympathize with it. This was a valuable lesson to learn, though it was not the lesson that Davidson desired to teach.

Yet Ellis came to Davidson fully prepared to receive just such a lesson; in his Australian *Notes*, set down years before his meeting with Davidson, I find this thought: "For let us be very certain that the only right belief for every man is that which his own consciousness tells him is true, although our consciousness tells us something different.[2]

[1] In a letter to me, dated November 22, 1925.

[2] See, in the Miscellany, under *Notes*, the section entitled *Good and Evil*.

The main purpose of the society, according to the minutes of that first meeting, seems to have been the formation of a communistic group "whose members should lead the higher life foreshadowed in the paper just read" (*i.e.*, Davidson's essay on *The New Life*). "The members would pursue their present callings in the world, but they would always aim to make the community as far as practicable self-contained and self-supporting, combining perhaps to carry on some common business or businesses." The Fellowship, as ultimately developed, concerns us more for the connection with it of Edith M. O. Lees, later the wife of Havelock Ellis, than for Ellis's relations to the society. Indeed, at the third fortnightly meeting, held on November 23, a historical rift already appears among the members; there is a split on the issue of the Fellowship's ideational basis. Shall the economic or the spiritual foundation be emphasized? At the meeting of December 7, with Hubert Bland in the chair, Dr. Burns-Gibson introduced a plan with nine signatories, among them Havelock Ellis. If the plan was rejected by the majority, this minority meant, as the nine announced, to proceed with the founding of a Fellowship upon the basis as presented. The object of the minority plan was "the cultivation of a perfect character in each and all"; the principle: "The subordination of material things to spiritual." With the minority Ellis remained; out of the majority, on January 4, 1884, was born the famous Fabian Society.

By the time Edith Lees had joined the Fellowship and, with her characteristic enthusiasm and energy, become one of its most active and devoted members, Ellis had with-

drawn from active participation. Occasionally he attended meetings; mainly, however, he was kept informed of its progress through the secretary, his friend, Percival Chubb. It was in this way that he first heard of the woman who later was to be his wife. At this period he met her, too, from time to time, but there does not seem to have been any attraction on either side; if anything, indeed, the reverse might be said to be true. Their real meeting was not to happen until 1890.

The Fellowship of the New Life continued for fifteen years, issuing, from July, 1889 to February, 1898, a quarterly paper called *Seedtime*. Several attempts were made to run what Pease calls "associated colonies"[1] (that is, the members living near each other), and a co-operative residence was established at 49 Doughty Street, Bloomsbury, near Mecklenburgh Square. According to Edward Carpenter,[2] here some "eight or ten members of the Fellowship made their home, and were to illustrate the advantages of the community life." Ramsay MacDonald, not dreaming of Labor Premierships, was among the chief inmates of the Fellowship House. Mr. Olivier, later Lord Olivier, who was also in the first Labor Government, occasionally resided there. Pease, Carpenter, and Mrs. Ellis in her novel *Attainment* (where she has draped the episode in a gossamer veil of fiction) agree that there was far more individualism than socialism, — than even sociability, — in the foredoomed experiment.

The Fellowship had for a time its own printing business, at Thornton Heath, near Croydon, and also a Kin-

[1] See, in Pease's book, already quoted, page 36.

[2] See Carpenter's Preface to Mrs. Ellis's book, already referred to, pages viii and ix.

dergarten in which it attempted to educate children aright. At Croydon, later on, there grew up an Ethical Church and a Boys' Guild. "Soon afterwards the Fellowship came to the conclusion that its work was done, the last number of *Seedtime* was published and in 1898 the Society was dissolved."

We shall return for a moment to the Fellowship when we come to consider the marriage of Miss Lees to Havelock Ellis, in 1891. For the present it is important to remark not only Ellis's tendency toward individualistic concentration, but his inner necessity to pursue his work almost in solitude. He joins these groups, he feels in harmony with their projects, yet is not made for the strategy or the suasion of the propagandist. Not only is he not social; he is not for societies. Like the protagonist of Ibsen, he has, through the laws of his nature, stood most strongly because most alone.

III

Sometime in the year 1884 Ellis made the acquaintance of Olive Schreiner; it was doubly important to his career. She is the first of the great women whose intimate friendship is to help him in one of the great phases of his life work; next to Edith Ellis, she is to remain the closest of those friends. She was about four years his senior; her *Story of an African Farm,* accepted for publication by George Meredith, for the firm of Chapman and Hall, had won her an early reputation. The first letters exchanged by Ellis and her dealt largely with this and other books. He brings to her attention the works of

Thomas Hardy; she asks him whether he knows "a little play called *Nora* by Ibsen, translated from the Swedish by Frances Lord." Of course she should have said from the Norwegian, and was referring to *The Doll's House.* They are soon deep in a discussion of Hinton, Heine, Edward Carpenter, Galton. "Don't think too much of Hinton," she cautions him in a letter of the 30th June, 1884. "Your nobler, stronger, many-sided self must not be crushed by him, or rather I should say warped, for it will *not* be crushed." These fears, as we now know, were hardly warranted. If today the world knows Hinton, it is chiefly through the labors of Ellis and his wife. Ellis, moreover, although the impress of Hinton is to be found often on his pages, has never regarded himself as at any time a disciple of Hinton.

Through the recent publication of Olive Schreiner's letters, we are able to follow, rather closely, the development of the remarkable friendship between one of England's greatest women and one of her greatest men. From the first she saw as clearly as he that his life's work lay elsewhere. She saw it all the more clearly since her own creative problem had likewise been a choice between literature and medicine. Writing to him on the 29th of July, 1884, she jumps from a consideration of Ibsen's *Ghosts* to Ellis's examinations:

"How is our exam going? It's this dry-as-dust part of the work that must be so horrible, especially, you see, if you don't think in your future life of making the practice and study of medicine the central point (and I feel most distinctly that your 'call' is to literature, just as mine was, in spite of my medical longing)."

It is interesting to consider that, although Ellis abandoned both the teaching and the medical professions, the rest of his life has been devoted to teaching and to healing humanity. Yet never with the pompous dogmatism of the academic; never with a laying down of the law. How many men of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have asked life such beautiful questions as he has asked, and how many have been as reluctant to bring back a Rhadamanthine reply?

The friendship, quickly formed, lasted until the death of Olive Schreiner. When he first met her, as he afterward wrote to her husband, S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner,[1] it was somewhat more than a year after the publication of *An African Farm.* She had "already a little overpassed the full first perfection of her girlish physical beauty, strength, and unimpeded mental activity. . . . Her health was uncertain, and the spasmodic attacks of asthma were liable to occur at varying intervals, to some extent depending upon locality, but between the attacks she appeared in robust health and they had as yet made no organic impress upon her constitution. I still clearly see her as I first saw her on calling at her lodgings in South Kensington to take her to an evening meeting: a short active robust woman, simple and unaffected in manner, and plainly dressed in loosely fitting garments, who sat on the couch with her hands resting on her thighs, her face expressive of latent radiant energy and eager receptivity to new impressions. She looked to me like a foreigner, a South European, possibly an Italian. . . ." She

[1] See *The Life of Olive Schreiner.* By S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner. 1924. Page 160 ff.

was supposed, by some, to be a Jewess, but we have it on her husband's word that this was an error to which, she used to say, she hoped there had been some truth.[1]

Ellis was at this time twenty-five, in the midst of his medical studies. Poetry, as written down in verses, was practically for him at an end. The poetry of life had begun. From the very beginning of their correspondence one notes a rapid crescendo of affection. There is a quick progression from conventionality to cordiality, and from friendly warmth to a feeling that, on Olive Schreiner's part at all events, became distinctly more than that bloodless and morbid thing called Platonic love.[2] Very soon,

[1] See *The Life of Olive Schreiner*, already quoted, pages 6 and 7. See also, in the *Letters* of Olive Schreiner, the one written to Ellis under date of April 18, 1893.

[2] We need not be left uncertain as to the opinions of both Olive Schreiner and Havelock Ellis on "Platonic love." Thus, in the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Vol. VI, pages 570 and 571, Ellis writes: "There can be no doubt whatever that it is perfectly possible for a man and a woman to experience for each other a friendship which never intrudes into the sexual sphere. As a rule, however, this only happens under special conditions, and those are conditions which exclude the closest and most intimate friendship. . . . Men who offer a woman friendship usually find that it is not received with much satisfaction except as the first installment of a warmer emotion, and women who offer friendship to a man usually find that he responds with an offer of love; very usually the 'friendship' is from the first simply love or flirtation masquerading under another name." Commenting on a letter, he adds (page 571, smaller type), "The frontier between erotic love and friendship is vague, and an intimate psychic intercourse that is sternly debarred from ever manifesting itself in a caress, or other physical manifestation of tender intimacy, tends to be constrained and arouses unspoken and unspeakable thoughts and desires which are fatal to any complete friendship."

Olive Schreiner dashes off a couple of letters in her characteristic manner. Writing to Ellis for the second time on August 18, 1885, she exclaims, "Oh, Henry, when passion enters into a relationship it does spoil the holy sweetness. But perhaps those people are right who say no such thing as friendship is possible between a man and a woman, only I

for example, we find her wishing that she were his sister (May 26, 1884);[1] then, by a process of partial identification she becomes fond of Ellis's sister, Louie. (June 29, 1884.) The next month she is discussing with her correspondent intimate details of the female life and its effect upon her mental tone. Three days later (July 15) Ellis has become her "other self," which for years he is to remain. Here, one sees, the identification has become complete. Before the end of the month she already fears that she cares for him too much; he has become a "tall angel." From now on she is lavish with her terms of endearment; he is her brother, her Harry (for his full name, at christening, was Henry Havelock Ellis), her baby, her heart-"aar" (*i.e.*, vein, in her African Dutch).

She feels an unreasoning fear that Ellis may be too much impressed by others, to the hurt of his individuality. Now it is Hinton, as we have seen; now it is herself. Yet in no case has the fear proved to be warranted. Was it her own impressionability speaking its concern for itself through him as a symbol? Or was it, too, that deceptive tolerance of Ellis which to the undiscerning looks like excessive impressionability? Upon minor points he is apt to be, if not indulgent, not exigent; upon major issues, however, where he has reached in his deliberate way a conviction, he is, again in his deliberate way, inflexible.

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can't bear to think so." And the very next day: "Yes, passion has its beautiful side, but it must be kept very much in the background, an underlying sweetness that one feels through other things. It seems to me that no one feels about these things just as I do."

[1] All letters referred to in the text may be found in *The Letters of Olive Schreiner*, edited by S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner. 1924.

There are, scattered through the correspondence, amusing side-lights upon the social shyness of the man. There was his habit of withholding himself, which to this pouring personality must often have proved exasperating. There was, as has already been noted, the aversion of his eyes from his interlocutor. Most comical of all, however, is the episode recounted in her letter of December 7, 1886:

I had called up both servants and told them if *you* came you were to be shown straight up. I never dreamed of my landlady's stopping you. Why didn't you tell someone to come up and tell me you were here?

Poor Olive! Alone and ill, with an indomitable will-to-joy, despite her frequent spells of depression, always at the mercy of the Mrs. Grundys! Small wonder that, in reaction against the silly world, she thrilled to visits from high-class prostitutes and wracked her mind for solutions to their problems. It is difficult to imagine Ellis being so easily routed from the very house of the woman who, only three days later, could write to him:

I don't think anyone has ever, or ever will, feel to me as you have felt. It is given to a human being once in a life to know such tenderness as yours has been to me. I know that. . . .

On February 24 of the same year Olive had written to Ellis that she had been reading a little more of George Sand's letters, "but one would like to see the letters they were in answer to." How could one better express the desire that becomes almost imperative as one reads her letters to Ellis? What were these letters in answer to?

There are moments when the friendship appears, not so much a one-sided love affair, as a love affair of which we have only one side. Thus, we find her writing to him on August 19, two years later, "I can understand that people should respect and admire me, but not that they love me. But you did once, and we all must let love die. . . ."

The Schreiner letters to Ellis are of primary importance to an understanding of the man at a period of his life for which hardly any other documents exist. Such of them as have been preserved, throw light upon the years between Ellis's qualification as a physician and his marriage to Edith Lees. Two years and two months after Ellis's marriage, Olive Schreiner married in February, 1894. Unfortunately for the completeness of our record, the author of *An African Farm,* in 1917, became specially anxious that her later letters to Ellis be destroyed. Her anxiety, as her husband tells us,[1] was "quite without reason," yet, despite Ellis's representations to her, she became so urgent that her wishes were complied with. Ellis "felt it so acutely that for many months he neither saw her nor wrote to her. The experience was the more trying as he was then in a state of mental and physical depression after the long illness and death of his wife. His feeling in this matter appears to have been not merely personal but also impersonal, for, since she had spent so many years in writing and publishing almost nothing, it seemed to him peculiarly sad that flashes of imagination and insight and criticism and reflection casually thrown out in these private letters should be lost." [2]

[1] See *The Letters of Olive Schreiner,* pages 202 and 203.

[2] Other mementos of this notable friendship have been lost through the nomadic necessities of Olive Schreiner's quest for health. About

Through the early letters we catch glimpses of Ellis's youthful Socialistic tendencies, — a Socialism compatible with his own marked individualism, as we shall come to see in *The Task of Social Hygiene.* He already has little faith in clubs and meetings and societies. He keeps a diary, communing thus with himself. Thus soon, for all the innate poeticality of his temperament, the youth reveals the remarkable balance that is to distinguish the matured artist of life. In a long letter of May 2, 1884, we find his new friend objecting to his attitude toward the mere reading of science. Ellis, as may be inferred, has demanded a sterner discipline. He would touch and handle things; he would insist upon the evidence of the senses. This poet is, too, a scientist. He has learned from long brooding, and many a lonesome night in the Australian Bush, what that stuff is on which dreams are made; at St. Thomas's he has examined that stuff in its concrete reality. He has developed, not an oppugnant, but a complementary desire for actual, factual, tactual knowledge.

By the 13th of July, 1884, she has received Ellis's diary and is reproving him for his use of the word God and the old symbols generally. "The use of them by

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1885 Ellis and she exchanged gifts; he gave her the most cherished thing he had to give: his early Shelley, marked with the dates of his frequent re-readings. She gave him an equally cherished copy of Goethe's *Gedichte.* It is characteristic of her that she speedily lost the Shelley, while Ellis still has the German poems. In her hurried removals Olive lost many a precious gift of Ellis's, most regrettably the earliest portrait of the man, — or, rather, the daguerreotype of an infant, "the image of radiant vigour, seated on his mother's lap — though this can only be divined — and from that throne gazing out on the world with a confident assurance never seen again on any portrait until old age was approaching."

people like you and me is never quite true. (That is what makes Hinton's writings so false). . . . I have taken care that the word 'God' does not occur in this latest book of mine, hateful damned name that it is." As a matter of fact, God, to Ellis, has never since his childhood days been an objective reality, and he has never so used the word. There is, with reference to Olive Schreiner's objection, this important observation to be made: in Ellis, such words as God, religion, morality and conversion have a personal meaning that is sharply distinct from the conventional acceptations. It is further worth noting that, despite her criticism, Olive Schreiner, in *Dreams,* published a few years after her letter, introduces the " hateful, damned name " as often as if she had never found objection to such a poetic, allegorical device. Yet there is valid criticism in the second letter that she sent on that same day. She makes it clearer when she speaks of Hinton, whom she has come to *love* (the italics are her own) because of his great free-loving soul. " I hate his clinging to the old symbols when he didn't cling to the thing meant, and his fear of saying the things he meant in naked black and white." Today such writers use " God " in quotation marks, with apology or explanation; tomorrow there will be no quotation marks, no apologies, no explanations. Those who have let fall the old conception will have found the new words for their new visions.

Olive must have been one of Ellis's first — and few — patients. We find her referring to the success of certain remedies he has suggested for her asthmatic attacks. With the insight of love she studies his capabilities, predicts his future, discovers his finer potentialities. " In

that silent passivity of yours" she writes (January 20, 1887) "you have always a shield up between you and the world. I have dropped my shield for the last four years, but I mean to take it up again." Almost a year later (January 3, 1888) she is telling him that "It is the scientific side of your nature will save you." And then, the inevitable reference to his reserve: "Are you learning to talk?" On the 24th of the same month she sends to him one of her most remarkable letters:

On one side your nature is like ——'s, and unlike mine. When I want to go to Trafalgar Square and fight the enemies of Freedom of the hour wildly and get my head broken, *you* say I am a fool, and you are *right*. When I run about after prostitutes, —— writes to tell me that I am a *fool* and wicked for leaving my work, and he is *right*. Goethe was a far more highly moral man than Schiller. The man who sits quietly in his study, writing and working out a great scientific truth, while his little petty state is going to pieces, is greater, more human, more moral than one who, like myself, would rush out wildly and fight. *You* of all people I ever met (infinitely more than ——) are a man of the study. You are perfectly dead on the other side. That is your weakness and your strength. That is why you will do great and useful work in the world. The world is *crashing* about you, your dearest friends are being dragged to prison, theories you have been interested in are being practically tested, cruel and wicked wrong is being done to innocent little children — and you look with astonishment and disapproval at another who is not untouched by it. . . . Your very medical work is not for its own sake, and give you £200 a year and you would curl yourself up in abstract study and thought for the rest of life. In time of revolution and war you will never be in the market place. . . . Your *greatness* is your absolute absence of

the enthusiasm of the market place. When the *Pall Mall* revelation affair happened, it was all —— could do to keep himself from dashing wildly into the fray; I wrote and collected women. You sat quietly by and felt nothing and did nothing. . . . I don't think you have ever realized your own character or your own aims. . . .

All this contains much truth, as does her later comment (October 30, 1905) that "there *is* in you a certain cold, bloodless, examining element; where Edith or I would say of a thing how loveable, you would say: '*How interesting!*' There is, *besides*, in your nature an infinity of tenderness, of love of truth, even of passion and ideality, that your face does always show. I have never in my long life seen any face so transfused with beautiful and ennobling and intense emotions as I have seen yours, till it was almost angelic."

We may readily overlook the mistaken judgment that Ellis was a man only of the study, and "perfectly dead on the other side." What is truly remarkable is that Olive Schreiner, before Ellis had published his first book, before he had turned thirty, should so clearly have seen into his special capabilities, into his highly individual character, as the next thirty years were to reveal them. She was the first to see and to predict, his greatness. It was as real to her then as it is to the world today. And he, to himself, was as real, as serene, — this young man who had been born old and who, in his age, has discovered for the spirit the secret of eternal youth which eluded Ponce de Léon because the adventurous Spaniard sought it for the body alone. Within ten years he was to be tested, by the prosecution of the first book in his *Studies in the Psy-*

Snapshots Taken in Winter of 1898–99, at Málaga, Hotel Hernan Cortes.

Above, Arthur Symons and Havelock Ellis (taken by Mrs. Ellis)
Below, Mr. and Mrs. Ellis (taken by Arthur Symons)

Ellis in 1898, About the Time of *Affirmations*

chology of Sex; to this personal assault he was to reply as calmly as to the public tumult of which Olive Schreiner wrote him so impassionedly.

"As one grew to know her well," wrote Ellis to Olive Schreiner's husband, in a fine paragraph that fairly sums her up, "one felt that the overwhelming vivacity and intensity of her inner emotional and intellectual life was the most impressive thing about her, enhanced by the sounding-board of powerful expression. She possessed a nature that was fundamentally simple, strong, primitive, and passionate. It absorbed its food through its vivid sense organs, but it worked mainly within, creating the atmosphere of an imaginative dream-world. For all her keen vision of the external world she was rarely in quite accurate adjustment to that world. So it came about that while she possessed more than feminine and emotional and maternal disposition, and at the same time a ruthless and penetrating intellect that was more than masculine in its power, she was a child, a trustful, idealizing, imaginative, helpless child. I well recall Eleanor Marx (daughter of Karl Marx) turning towards her one day to say with an affectionate smile: 'What you need is a nursemaid.' But those who learnt to love her felt that she was a divine child."

IV

Ellis's medical course was to prove a long one. His interests were so broad and so many that they embraced a great number of subjects having no relation whatever to *materia medica.* He had begun to write for magazines on matters of spiritual and artistic import, expatiating

upon the unpublished manuscripts of Hinton, dealing with deep discernment of Thomas Hardy, delving into the lesser Elizabethans. His earliest long article was on Hardy in the *Westminster Review*, and a little later — strange to relate — he was in charge of the reviewing for the Theological Section of that *Review*, a post which chanced then to fall vacant. This work probably brought in the first payment that Ellis received from writing. Old Dr. Chapman, the *Review's* remarkable editor, who had been the friend of George Eliot and Mill, and twenty years earlier had gathered all the advanced Radicals under his editorship, was much attracted to Ellis and wished, had funds allowed, to appoint him Assistant Editor. As early as 1884 he inaugurates his career as editor and introducer with his Introduction to James Hinton's *The Law-Breaker and the Coming of the Law*, ostensibly edited by Mrs. Hinton, but in reality mostly by Ellis. There follows, in 1887, the Heine volume in the Scott Library, containing translations for the most part made or very thoroughly revised by Ellis. We have found him much preoccupied with Heine's verses in Australia; just before leaving for England and immediately after his return, he had busied himself, for discipline in German, upon translations from Heine's prose, the *Florentine Nights* in particular. Ellis, in fact, practically learned his German through Heine. Other volumes edited for the same Scott Library (then called the Camelot Series and under the general editorship of Ernest Rhys) were a selection of Ibsen plays, by means of which Ibsen first became widely known in English; a selection of Vasari's *Lives of the Painters*, with revised text; and three volumes of *Selections from Lan-*

dor, a master of style whom he had first discovered in his earliest Australian years, in the Public Library of Sydney, and has never ceased to regard with profound admiration.

From time to time, as subjects of interest occurred to him, he wrote articles for magazines, and slowly — during the next ten or fifteen years — he became an always welcome contributor to the three leading English reviews: the *Nineteenth Century* (under Knowles), the *Contemporary* (under Bunting) and the *Fortnightly* (under Courtney). He was not personally known, curiously enough, to any of these editors.

It was Ellis who, while still a medical student, hit upon the idea of the *Mermaid Series* of Elizabethan dramatists, editing his volumes entirely before he had qualified as a physician. Had not the series passed from the hands of the first publisher, Vizetelly, into those of Fisher Unwin, in 1889, Ellis's work on it would have been much more considerable. No sooner had this left his hands than he planned another series, which has become quite as widely known in its especial field as has the *Mermaid*. This was the *Contemporary Science Series*, devised and inaugurated while Ellis was still a student, in 1889.

The *Mermaid Series* had been entrusted to Ellis without any solicitation on his part. Vizetelly, at the time (1887), was issuing an unexpurgated edition of Zola and it occurred to the student of medicine that a similar service might be performed for the Elizabethan dramatists. The only unexpurgated editions available at the time were complete and expensive affairs, beyond the reach of the ordinary purse; moreover, some of these were no longer to be obtained. On Ellis's part, then, the sugges-

tion was purely disinterested and impersonal; it never occurred to him that he would have a part in the scheme. Vizetelly, however, sent him a cordial reply. He could not supervise the enterprise himself; would not Ellis take literary charge of it? The youth was hardly prepared to do so; the field was absolutely new to him and there was the whole subject to master. None the less, he accepted the invitation, and still cherishes the memory of Vizetelly for the sporting chance he took upon an unknown and illogical candidate for such an editorship. The man, who was a highly intelligent and capable fellow, backed up Ellis very ably on the technical and typographical side. The Series, as students know, is highly appreciated to this day. Vizetelly soon proved a martyr to the priggishness and prudery that Ellis, in his own time, was to encounter. In 1889 he was imprisoned for the heinous offense of presenting a French author in unbowdlerized English versions which freely circulate today. He was ruined; his death may be traced to this persecution.

The *Contemporary Science Series* was more Ellis's than was the *Mermaid*. Already he was in touch with the Walter Scott Publishing Company through his editing of the volumes devoted to Heine, Ibsen and others. The old *International Scientific Series* was drawing to its close, and Ellis considered that the time was ripe for a successor, to be planned on more modern lines. Gordon, the manager of the Scott company, made up for his lack of scholarly attainment with a wealth of ideas about publishing on a large scale; one of his friends had christened him "a Napoleon of business." Under his direction the

firm was then at the zenith of its success. This time, when Ellis proposed the scheme, he put himself forward as General Editor, and was welcomed with open arms. Here was the very thing that Gordon wanted, and the young man of thirty was presented with a perfectly free hand in all arrangements. The experience, with the inevitable mistakes, was valuable; the series continued up to the outbreak of the war in 1914, — an enviable record of a quarter of a century. It is not without significance that the very first volume to be brought out in the series was Geddes and Thomson's widely read *The Evolution of Sex*. For that matter, it is worth noting that the *Mermaid Series* was, by express definition and planning of the editor, unexpurgated. Approaching literature in the *Mermaid Series*, Ellis asked of it a free, complete, unblushing reality, which involved first of all a deliverance from inhibitions of language or thought. Approaching life in the *Contemporary Science Series*, Ellis sought to clear the road at once with a full, unexpurgated treatment of the sources of existence.

With regard to Ellis's status in the medical profession it should be explained that he passed, in 1889, the Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries; it is a very ancient right of that Society to grant medical qualification. (Keats, it may be interpolated, passed the same examination, only that in his day surgery and midwifery were not included.) Ellis, then, — as for that matter, Keats, who is often wrongly referred to as an "apothecary" — left St. Thomas's as a full-fledged physician.

V

We now approach a great moment in Ellis's life: his thirtieth year. What has gone before may be looked upon as being in the nature of deliberate preparation. Long previous, he had determined not to publish a book before thirty; to have done so sooner would have been, in his conviction, to risk the embarrassments of immaturity. Once again, as before and as so often since, foreign travel plays an important rôle in developing his outlook and in deepening his insight. His early journey around the world had been, so to speak, on the circumference of a vast eccentric circle of which Paris was the center. Now he is to know France, and soon, Spain, and Russia, Germany and Italy. As at the very outset of his emotional and intellectual life, a remarkable balance is maintained in his labors. The editions of Heine, Ibsen, and others; the *Mermaid Series*, — answer to his spiritual interests. The *Contemporary Science Series* fulfils his scientific, his materialistic needs. To this he contributes, as the second book he wrote, his widely read and admired work on *The Criminal*. Even in the publication of his own books the balance that has distinguished his life from the beginning is maintained. *The Criminal* and *The New Spirit:* science and art, biology and psychology, body and soul, come jointly to flower in 1889, as Ellis turns thirty. Each is published during the following year.

About *The Criminal* there is this to be noted: it is, unlike all the other books by its author, rather of the nature of a *tour de force*. It was, indeed, originally written in an astonishingly short time; this is all the more surpris-

ing when we consider that Ellis was not at all prepared for the task, had felt no deep interest in the subject, and was compelled to cover a wide range of varied material before co-ordinating the book. His interest in the study has been wakened by his coming one day in a bookstall across Tarde's *La Criminalité Comparée*, which had introduced to the French reading public the science of criminal anthropology.

After having qualified as a physician, Ellis, in 1889, made his third and longest visit (of some months) to Paris in company of one of his sisters, Louie, and of his intimate friend, Arthur Symons.

The hotels at which he had previously stayed had proved disappointing; this time, on the recommendation of Professor Patrick Geddes, who knew Paris very well, he went to the Corneille, opposite the Luxembourg Gardens. Here, as Ellis later learned, many persons famous in letters and science had stayed; the Hotel had been described, too, by Balzac. Ellis had introduced Symons to Paris the previous year, but Symons's knowledge of Parisian life was much more intimate than Ellis's. Ellis, for example, never visited the famous Moulin Rouge of that day, where Symons worshipped at the shrine of Mimi-Patte-en-l'Air, Grille d'Egout, and other renowned stars of the *Chahut*. In fact, until 1924, Ellis never attended the *Folies Bergères*. He and Symons, in these olden days, went often together to the *Comédie Française* and the *Odéon;* they saw Antoine's first performance of Ibsen's *Ghosts*.

Ellis visited various hospitals and clinics, and occasionally followed the lectures and demonstrations of Charcot

and of other great luminaries of medicine. Much more time, however, was taken up with meeting the lights of art and letters, and in these expeditions it was Symons who took the enterprising and pioneering part. In this way Ellis came into touch with Mallarmé, Rodin, Remy de Gourmont, Verlaine, Coppée, Huysmans, Carrière, Henri de Regnier, Charles Morice, Odélon Redon, Moréas, and many other more or less famous personages. These meetings became the source of many cherished memories, but it was only with de Gourmont that the relationship was carried on until the end. It was de Gourmont who arranged for the translation of Ellis's books into French. Later Ellis wrote what may have been the first article on de Gourmont to appear in English. "The most advanced man in England," was the Frenchman's later comment on the writer, thus antedating by some three decades the similar encomium of Mencken.

A photograph of Ellis taken at this period (1890) reveals a firm yet plastic face older by far in expression than the thirty years just passed. Luxuriant hair, parted in the middle and flowing well back over crown and temples, sets off a high, broad forehead. Already the serenity that is to mark him for the rest of his life dwells upon his features and in eyes that live even through the deadening transference of photography. Just as his very earliest attempts at literary expression proclaim and forecast the sage of sixty, so do the pictures of Ellis's early manhood reveal in essential trait and temper the facial expression of maturity. Life has begun to smile upon him; he sits back and surveys it quizzically. Surely those lips are sen-

sual, yet the way they close — not too tightly — suggests that they are not for raucous laughter or vituperation. The answering smile to life is not, indeed, on Ellis's lips; it is lurking there in his contemplative, almost mystical eyes, that seem at the same time to gaze inward and out. Again a completed circle.

CHAPTER SIX

Edith Lees — Marriage — Early Books — Magazine Articles

I

BY the time Ellis returns from Paris, Miss Edith Lees has risen to a position of central importance in the Fellowship of the New Life. She is the secretary, almost the factotum, of the idealistic communal establishment on Doughty Street, where the individuals of the strange experiment are pledged, after Goethe, to live resolutely "in the Whole, the Good, and the Beautiful." As her chief coadjutor in running the affairs of the house, after Mr. Chubb has migrated to the United States, she has none other than Ramsay MacDonald, one day to rise to the Premiership of the Empire. As Mrs. Ellis later satirized the Fellowship (in the weakest of her novels, *Attainment*) the experiment, with its Goethean aspirations, was headed from the first for much irresolute living in the partial, the bad and the ugly. Individual temperament was bound to clash with collective program. Upon marriage, Miss Lees left the Fellowship for a more harmonious, if less numerous, fellowship.

The decisive meeting between Ellis and his future wife, after their early, casual acquaintanceship during his student days, was a pure accident, — one of those coinci-

dental encounters that determines a life. Ellis had already published his first book, *The New Spirit*, of which the publisher, a friend of hers, had sent a copy to Miss Lees. He was leaving his post in Cornwall, where he had completed his medical duty as *locum tenens*, and had gone to Lamorna, to stay for a week at the house of a friend, Miss Agnes Jones, who had been a friend and devoted disciple of Hinton.[1] It chanced that Miss Lees, in company of her servant-friend (it was one of the Fellowship principles that the master-and-man relationship should be converted into one of unostentatious companionship), was doing a walking tour round the Cornish coast. By previous arrangement she was to spend the night with Miss Jones, and had arrived an hour or two in advance of Ellis. Learning that Ellis was expected, Miss Lees frankly evinced her displeasure, and was for resuming the tour at once. The servant, however, was too tired to walk any farther that night; Miss Lees, too, might have recalled that she had read *The New Spirit* with appreciation and delight. She stayed. The following day, Miss Jones and Mr. Ellis accompanied Miss Lees and her servant-friend a few miles on her walk, in the direction of Land's End. It must have been an engrossing conversation, for when they parted this time there was not the slightest doubt on either side that they must soon meet again.

Two days later Ellis went across Cornwall and spent several hours at St. Ives. It was the beginning of a courtship that led to their marriage a year later, in December of 1891. That marriage, rather than the happy ending

[1] Miss Jones later married; she died some two years before the time of this writing.

of conventional report (and what a wealth of unspoken confession dwells in that sad convention!), was a happy beginning. It was a simple, but daring step in the direction of liberated love. It was misunderstood, ridiculed, suspected, — and was for twenty-five years, till her death, a thing of beauty.

There can be no harm in declaring now what many guessed for themselves upon the appearance of Mrs. Ellis's *The New Horizon in Love and Life*, namely, that in her chapter on Semi-Detached Marriage, she spoke with her husband and herself in mind.[1]

Perhaps a reliable illustration, as an instance of a sane experiment, may be given here, as theories count for less than actual facts. Twenty-five years ago two writers of unusually sensitive temperaments, when entering that bond of matrimony which so often ends in disaster, decided like Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft, that they would not always dwell together in the same house, in order to escape the usual fate of boredom or indifference observed amongst so many of their friends. In fact, they resolved to ignore tradition and make only one vow on their wedding day, the vow of the lovers of tomorrow. They simply promised never to deceive one another. The man and woman are economically independent of one another, and in all external matters have behaved as true comrades or business partners would do. In their approaching old age they contemplate living side by side as a natural outcome of their experiment. The gossips, of course, have been busy, and the experimentalists have had their personal difficulties. No artist in any path of life can arrange his pictures, his music, or his books without smudges, discords, obliterations, and additions. It is only the amateur who is content with a rough draft. If in the

[1] See pages 24, 25 and 28 of the book.

end, however, some slight blow is given to the slavery of women and the traditionalism of men, any struggle or suffering in experiments is not in vain. . . .

In the relationship referred to just now the husband and wife have each their own little home, and visit one another whenever possible. Outside friendships, diversity of interests, interchange of daily letters, and varieties of occupation keep their love life on a saner plane than would be possible to some temperaments in the stress of daily domestic routine. A stranger meeting these two people in a railway carriage and hearing scattered bits of their conversation inquired who they were. When informed, the significant remark was: "Oh, no! They could not have been married. He was much too interested and polite."

This was set down, perhaps in America, in 1915, the year before Mrs. Ellis's death. Six years before, bringing his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* to a close, Ellis had, in his chapter on The Art of Love, considered the same question from his own standpoint. It is interesting to compare the statements of husband and wife upon this aspect of their experiment. Wrote Ellis:

All the tendencies of our civilized life are, in personal matters, towards individualism; they involve the specialization, and they ensure the sacredness, of personal habits and even peculiarities. This individualism cannot be broken down suddenly at the arbitrary dictation of a tradition, or even by the force of passion from which restraints have been removed. Out of deference to the conventions and prejudices of their friends, or out of the reckless abandonment of young love, or merely out of a fear of hurting each other's feelings, young couples have often plunged prematurely into an unbroken intimacy which is even more disastrous to the permanency of marriage than the failure ever to reach a complete intimacy at all. That is one of the chief

reasons why most writers on the moral hygiene of marriage nowadays recommend separate beds for the married couple, if possible separate bedrooms, and even sometimes, with Ellen Key, see no objection to their living in separate houses. Certainly the happiest marriages have often involved the closest and most unbroken intimacy, in persons peculiarly fitted for such intimacy. It is far from true that, as Bloch has affirmed, familiarity is fatal to love. It is deadly to a love that has no roots, but it is the nourishment of the deeply-rooted love. Yet it remains true that absence is needed to maintain the keen freshness and fine idealism of love. "Absence," as Landor has said, "is the invisible and incorporeal mother of ideal beauty." The married lovers who are only able to meet for comparatively brief periods between long absences have often experienced in these meetings a life-long succession of honeymoons.

There can be no question that as presence has its risks for love, so also has absence. Absence, like presence, in the end, if too prolonged, effaces the memory of love, and absence, further, by the multiplied points of contact with the world which it frequently involves, introduces the problem of jealousy. . . .[1]

The difference in the styles of these two excerpts suggests the difference between the woman and the man who wrote them. Here, indeed, was the unity-in-variety of the old aestheticians. Here, for a rarity outside of a Shakespearean sonnet, was a marriage of true minds to which no impediment was admitted, — that did not bend with the remover to remove. Note the personal terms in which Mrs. Ellis writes, and contrast this with the seemingly impersonal terms of her husband. Note her

[1] Pages 562 and 563 of Volume VI. In writing of married lovers parted by long absences Ellis had his own parents specially in mind. Of them, his observation always held true. As a sailor, his father was able to spend only a few weeks of every year at home.

conscious preoccupation with the feminine aspect of the experiment; mark, on the other hand, his equable inclusion of both sexes in a general sweep, yet his allowance for disparity in temperament and difference in effect. To counterbalance Ellis's social shyness, Edith Lees brought to the union an electric personality alive with a veritable gift for human companionship. She stood as a buffer between him and the numerous contacts which could so easily have disturbed him in his quieter labors. She represented ideas in action; he was passive thought. She labored in England and America through the propagandist's need of winning conviction; he, in impassioned impassivity, worked in solitude, in his laboratory of ideas. She was, in a way, his chief society; through her he kept in touch with the wider, even more frivolous, interests of life, which he could understand and enjoy even if it was not his way to take part in them.

In her account, above, of their individual living together, Mrs. Ellis perhaps over-rated the element of their absence from each other. They always spent the four winter months together without break; for an average of two or three of the remaining months of the year they were with each other in one part or other of the country. There was little collaboration in their writings. In earlier years Mrs. Ellis helped her husband as amanuensis; it was in this way, as he has told, that he translated Zola's *Germinal*. As for his participation in her work, it was in the nature of passive enjoyment or at most of criticism rather than of active aid. Lending a copy of Mrs. Ellis's *The Imperishable Wing*, to Marguerite Tracy, sometime in 1920, Ellis remarked, "The stories

are all about Death, and that is how I came to suggest to her the title from Rossetti." Then, "with a smile of complete detachment," he added, "That's the only contribution I ever made to her work." Mrs. Ellis, however, as we learn from the same account, "loved talking of her work with him, and after an early morning's work (her mornings sometimes began at four), she was eager to read to him what she had written and hear his criticism; if the critical interruptions failed to occur at sufficiently frequent intervals she would be hurt and exclaim: 'You are not listening!'"[1]

The nature and quality of Edith Ellis's writings I shall deal with in a supplementary chapter. For the present it is important to realize the complementary part she played in her husband's life. She had his own gift for seeing life in the round, and herself rounded to completion a beautiful need of his nature. Hers was a soul all charity, though meekness and mildness alike were alien to her spirit. She was full of mischief and impishness, as well as of storms. She fairly magnetized her friends, even as does Ellis to this very day. And strangely enough, in much the same manner. Her eyes, as Mr. Marriott described them, were, in a photographic language, "but with a spiritual meaning, 'wide-angle' eyes, taking in the whole which explains the part." (Recall the "pagan slant" of Ellis's eyes.) "If, as is held, there is a relation in which everything and everybody is good, I am persuaded that Mrs. Ellis saw everything and everybody in that relation. She was often spoken of as deluded in her likings, but I do not think she had even any illusions; she

[1] *The New Horizon in Love and Life*, pages xxxii and xxxiii.

Moor Cottage, Carbis Bay, Cornwall

The shelter on the left was made by Mrs Ellis for her husband. Here, in 1927, was completed the last volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*

A Woodcut by Maurice Duvalet

saw too clearly to condemn." Physically and spiritually that could describe Ellis himself. As Marriott recalls her eyes, they were extraordinary, "with the lightest iris I have ever seen." I like particularly his reference to a vision that took in the whole by which the part is explained; it defines not only the beautiful vision of Ellis and his wife, but the true nature of all vision.

In one important respect, however, Edith Ellis differed from her husband. She was a kettle of bubbling enthusiasms. Committee meetings, theatricals, masked balls, parties, — these she loved and enlivened with her dynamic presence. Some called her The Jester, and she was a classic example of the type, knowing the dark moods that are traditionally associated with the merryandrew's levity. Others, thinking rather of the intrepid pioneer that lodged in her frailty, nicknamed her "Joannes," because she was a prophetess crying in the wilderness. And truly, she lived before her time. Among the outstanding women of her day she merits a place together with those who, in their various ways, have stood almost alone against the incomprehension and the ridicule of a compact majority. When her tale is fully told, when her novels and stories and essays have been read and related to the active and ardent, if constitutionally nervous and moody life out of which they grew, she will be seen to stand with such pioneers of individual and social freedom as Mary Wollstonecroft, Olive Schreiner, Ellen Key, and Rosa Luxemburg.[1]

[1] See, for a full treatment of Edith Ellis's writings, pages 255 *et seq.*

II

I do not hesitate to pronounce *The New Spirit* among the most important books published in the closing years of the nineteenth century. One speaks of promising "first novels"; here is a book of "first essays" that reveals a new world, — an inner world, to be sure, a highly personalized universe, since no two worlds can ever be the same. Ellis, making his literary and philosophical début, appears as a finished artist. One may pass from his latest published work to these pages of his early maturity without any obtruding sense of difference in style or thought or substance. Here is a world in which chiefly figure five typical literary personalities, — Diderot, Heine, Whitman, Ibsen and Tolstoi, — whose "intimate thought and secret emotions" have become "the common property of after generations." In studying them, in presenting them, Ellis studies and presents himself, and, indirectly, his readers. Arrays of books, brave speech and heroic gesture, are not his interest; he would reach behind and beyond these to the motive forces within, to the reactions of daily life and the critical moments of that life. Essentially, his is a realistic method, but without the excessive consciousness that characterizes the cramped and hectic agitation of so many later "realists." Ellis, in his placid way, has looked upon a broader and deeper reality than has been visioned by the neo-realists. He has gazed with equanimity upon life and death, in dissection room, in hospital, on land and sea; he has penetrated into the jungle of man's body and psyche; but always with a sense of proportion which in

itself is a philosophy. Literary realism and naturalism he has studied, too, from its chief documents, and ever with a wise word above mere commendation or condemnation.

What is the new spirit? It is, briefly, "a quickening of the pulse of life" resulting from the action of three forces, of which one is science, the other two being the rise of women and the coming of democracy. The history of human thought, though we are fond of dividing it into neatly ordered chapters, is not a series of lighted compartments separated by tracts of darkness; it is a *continuum*. "The tree of life is always in bloom somewhere, if we only know where to look." In the scientific spirit — there is no paradox in the juxtaposition of the words — Ellis finds his new faith. "The fruits of this scientific spirit are sincerity, patience, humility, the love of nature and the love of man. 'Wisdom is to speak truth and consciously to act according to nature.' So spake the old Ephesian, Heraclitus, to whom, rather than to Socrates, men are now beginning to look back as the exponent of the true Greek spirit. . . ." So, too, in his first printed book, speaks Ellis, intent on rearing human society not upon a base of words and revelations, but upon "the sure and simple foundations of man's organism."

Ellis here foresees the rise of women, and already differentiates between the acquisition of the ballot and the acquirement of a social and individual intelligence which that ballot may express. He conceives education not as an accretion of facts, but as a harmony of body, sense and emotion as well as intellect. This personal harmony,

moreover, is to be orchestrated, so to speak, socially. "It is for the advantage of the men of science who have paid for the seclusion of extreme specialism by incapacity to understand popular movements and popular needs; it is to the advantage of all that there should be no impassible gulf between those who know and those who are ignorant. It is well to sacrifice much, if we may thereby help to diffuse the best things that are known and thought in the world, and make the scientific attitude, even more than scientific results, a common possession." I do not believe it may be deduced from Ellis's words that he would be in favor of the numerous short-cuts which have infested the book-market in these later days of demotic roads to learning. The road, if not royal or a king's highway, is yet the road to a kingdom. A sharp difference must be maintained between democratizing knowledge and denaturing it in order to give to inferior intelligences the illusion of learning.

The new spirit, then, is the scientific attitude. It leads, inevitably, to greater socialization. Just as the ballot, however, is but a means, so too is socialization but a background out of which the true individual is to arise. Here, of course, speaks the undogmatic Socialism of Ellis's days in the *Progressive Association*. His concern, primarily, has always been the emergence of the significant individual. Rebellion against society is not the goal but rather the necessary starting-point of that individual; it is not, as so often it becomes in other types of personality, an assertive pleasure in itself, but rather the condition of a new social and individual dispensation. In *The Task of Social Hygiene* Ellis, years later, is to define this posi-

tion more clearly; for the moment he puts it succinctly enough:

> It may not be out of place to point out that while this process of socialization is rapidly developing, individual development so far from stopping, is progressing no less rapidly. It is too often forgotten that the former is but the means to secure the latter. While we are socializing all those things of which we have equal common need, we are more and more tending to leave to the individual the control of those things which in our complex civilization constitute individuality. We socialize what we call our physical life in order that we may attain greater freedom for what we call our spiritual life.

I doubt that a central issue was ever more simply put. I doubt that a central issue, in the thirty years that followed this statement, was ever more wretchedly misunderstood or more criminally botched in the working out of its underlying principles. Ellis, seeing thus early beyond national boundaries, foresees likewise the formation of international tribunals and the replacement by international litigation of such antiquated practices as war. He looks forward, similarly, to a universal language that shall act, not as the successor to any existing tongue, but as an auxiliary speech.

Art and religion, finally, are spiritual twins, the one a release, the other an anodyne. To drink too deeply of religion is to paralyze activity. Art, to Ellis, is "no mere passive hyperaesthesia to external impressions or exclusive absorption in a single sense," but rather "a many-sided and active delight in the wholeness of things. . . . Thus understood it has the firmest of scientific founda-

tions; it is but the reasonable satisfaction of the instinctive cravings of the organism, cravings that are not the less real for being often unconscious. Its satisfaction means the presence of joy in our daily life, and joy is the prime tonic of life. It is the gratification of the art-instinct that makes the wholesome stimulation of labor joyous; it is in the gratification of the art-instinct that repose becomes joyous."

A many-sided and active delight in the wholeness of things. There, in ten words you have Ellis, self-defined.

What follows immediately upon these words exemplifies such a wholeness by merging science and art in a physico-psychic definition. More: ten years before Freud's epoch-making work on dreams, we find Ellis relating the peculiar satisfactions of art to its nurture of instinctive and unconscious cravings of the organism. In his essay on Casanova (in *Affirmations*) some eight years later, he again anticipated Freud, treating artistic creation as a sublimation of sex repression.[1] In that essay he was, as Mr. Mordell has pointed out, the first writer in England to develop the thesis that art is such a sublimation.[2]

In his first book, then, Ellis reveals himself as a qualified optimist. The world is a series of cycles being ever renewed. "The thing that has been is the thing that will be again; if we realize that, we may avoid many of the disillusions, miseries, insanities, that for ever accompany the throes of new birth. Set your shoulder joyously to the world's wheel: you may spare yourself some unhap-

[1] See, for Ellis's relations to psychoanalytic thought and terminology, Chapter Nine.

[2] *The Literature of Ecstasy*, New York, 1921. Page 185.

piness if, beforehand, you slip the book of Ecclesiastes beneath your arm." In the life of his youth Ellis foreshadows the career of his life. In the first of his books he foreshadows the career of his letters.

In Diderot, Ellis sees the exemplar of the scientific spirit as it manifests itself in an inspiring enthusiasm. Heine is the defender of the inalienable rights of the spirit, — the face of Mephistopheles made radiant by the smile of Christ. Whitman restores man to a wholeness that has been lost since the days of the Greeks; he merges body and soul into a living integrity.

> I give nothing as duties,
> What others give as duties I give as living impulses.
> (Shall I give the heart's action as a duty?)

This Ellis translates into one of those simple definitions of his that so often strike the reader as a very music of thought. "Morality is thus the normal activity of a healthy nature, not the product either of tradition or of rationalism." Ibsen he envisages as a modern Dante, — a bold comparison, and yet so true in its psychological and aesthetic implications. For Florentine and Norwegian alike remained true to a personal vision, were alike "themselves" in a hostile world. Tolstoi incarnates groping Russia; if Ibsen is a modern Dante, may I not liken Russia to a Dante of the nations? [1]

The Conclusion of *The New Spirit* is, virtually, a spiritual Declaration of Independence. It embodies

[1] The reprint of *The New Spirit* that is published in the United States as one of the *Modern Library Series* contains an essay on Huysmans. This, of course, belongs to *Affirmations*. A new, authorized edition of the book has just appeared, with a new preface, through Houghton, Mifflin & Company.

Ellis's conception of religion, which is far too broad to enter a church door, too deep to dwell under the roof of synagogue or mosque. At the same time it is so intense a flame that it burns at the core of the atheist, the agnostic, the cynic, the pessimist. It lives in the men he has been discussing, in all men who have said something to the world, or have heard the world's voice in their peculiar way. A strange religion this, correlating body, soul and mind. "There can be no change in consciousness without a corresponding change in the vascular circulation. There can be no thrill of body in a soul without a correlated thrill of mind. Matter and mind in the soul are co-extensive. When we speak of the 'spirit' as ruling the body, or as yielding to it, we are, it must be remembered, using a traditional method of speech which had its origin in a more primitive theory, just as we still speak of sun-rise. In the soul the spiritual can no more be subordinated to the material, strictly speaking, than in water the oxygen can be subordinated to the hydrogen. The old dispute for supremacy between mind and matter no longer has any significance. Both matter and mind are in the end equally unknown: *exeunt in mysterium.*"

Thus conceiving the soul, Ellis proceeds to a strictly scientific classification of the impulses that arouse its affections. For it is the total of these impulses that constitutes religion, at the center of which stands, not God, but oneself. Religion becomes "the sum of the unfettered expansive impulses of our being." Those impulses may come, first of all, from within; they may come from other souls; they may come from the world itself, as distinguished from souls; they may derive, lastly, from "an

intuition of union with the world." Ellis's *religion* thus becomes almost coterminous with Freud's later *libido*. "Our supreme business in life — not as we made it, but as it was made for us when the world began — is to carry and to pass on as we received it, or better, the sacred lamp of organic being that we bear with us. . . . Religion is the stretching forth of our hands toward the illimitable. It is an intuition of the final deliverance, a half-way house on the road to that City which we name mysteriously Death."

Even in these closing words of *The New Spirit* we find a further parallel with the very latest phases of Freudian thinking. For the Freud of old age has developed a theory of the death instinct that advances "beyond the pleasure principle."[1]

I have dwelt upon the first published book of Ellis because it is the key to every other book that he has written. Here are the major themes of his life's music. Here, too, is the dominant mood that runs without essential variation through his labors of the next thirty five years. He speaks, in the Introduction to the book, of Goethe's serenity and Emerson's hilarity, and of Carlyle's failure to attain the qualities of these two spirits. In Ellis, it seems, thus early is a serenity and a hilarity, or, rather, a serene hilarity. A rare, seemingly a paradoxical pair, yet no more incompatible in man than in architecture are dignity and grace. This young man of thirty has made his peace with life and death.[2]

[1] See, by Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, New York.

[2] *The New Spirit*, soon after publication, was translated for issue in a magazine by M. Henry Bérenger, the present French Ambassador to the United States.

III

The Criminal appears in 1890, shortly after *The New Spirit;* together with *The Nationalisation of Health,* 1892, it may be looked upon as forming a biological pendant to the psychological and spiritual implications of *The New Spirit.* These books, indeed, are what we might call Ellis's "new body." *The Criminal,* as we have seen, was done in the way of a *tour de force. The Nationalisation of Health* grew somewhat more logically out of Ellis's medical experiences. In these appears for the first time, the Ellis of the case method and the statistical table. After *The New Spirit,* statistics and cases would be among the things least expected from this seeming visionary. Yet his imaginative flights are based on just such solid investigation; the eagle weighs heavier than the air through which it soars. He may quote Homer in the original Greek; he may interest himself in the artistic strivings of the criminal type; yet throughout is a sanative balance of art and science, a healing humaneness and Humanism. The conclusions which Ellis reached have become common property, although our attitude toward the criminal is still vindictive rather than curative. We are still under the sway of concepts derived from antiquated dogma rather than from enlightened scientific research. We speak still of "responsibility," which implies a doctrine of free will. Our prisons, in a word, are still dungeons of punishment rather than hospitals for the body and mind. It is today as true as when Ellis wrote it that

> Our courts of justice are still pervaded by the barbaric notion of the duel. We arrange a brilliant tournament, and are inter-

ested not so much in the investigation of truth as in the question of who will "win." We cannot hope for any immediate radical change in this method, but it is our duty to do all we can to strengthen those elements in our courts which are concerned, not with the gaining of a cause, but with the investigation of truth. This and all other reforms in our methods of dealing with the criminal, as I have already pointed out, and would again insist, cannot be attained by a mere administrative *fiat;* nor is it desirable that they should be. Before any reform can be safely embodied in the law it must first be embodied in the popular consciousness. We need here, as in so many other fields of our social life, a strong body of intelligent and educated opinion.

Just as the great problem of the fuller life today is the change of venue, so to speak, from the domain of morality in the narrow sense to the domain of aesthetics, so is the problem of the criminal related to a change from the domain of narrow religion and the principle of punishment to that of social prophylaxis and the treatment of individual mind and body.

The Nationalisation of Health is similarly preoccupied with the technology of social improvement, studying this time not the abnormal but the so-called normal element of society. Here Ellis speaks out of a recent medical experience in London, in large manufacturing towns and in rural districts. The young mystic of *The New Spirit* is no deliquescent dilettante of the exotic and the esoteric. He knows that trees, though they lift their crowns heavenward, are rooted in the soil. He complains, indeed, in his Preface, that "we postpone laying the foundations of our social structure in order to elaborate its pinnacles," whereas (in the Conclusion) "Under no

national system can training of the mind be placed before the life of the body."

"The fate of man," reads the epigraph of the book, too optimistically, "is in his own hands." Yet that fate may be altered, given a new direction, a finer impetus. Recent investigations into the phenomena of heredity and environment, indeed, have invested those biological terms with a new, a fairly Ellisian unity. They are not, it seems, different and implacable entities but rather different and amenable aspects.[1] They represent a fate that is largely, if not wholly, in man's own hands. The outlook of the book, as of all the man's work, is distinctly, though not polemically, international. Ellis's conception of democracy itself, indeed, appears as one of "international self-realisation."

From Ellis's standpoint *The Nationalisation of Health* was an unimportant book. Though its points were freshly put, they were neither novel nor original. This is true also of *The Criminal,* which, however, though it is now out of date, was of greater importance. It brought to English readers, for the first time, the new ideas of investigation with regard to the criminal that were then being pursued on the Continent. It was, moreover, the first English book that presented "criminology" as a sort of science. Its primary interest was not for the general reader but for workers in science and medicine. Today, of course, it has been completely superseded by the rapid growth of criminology. The import of both books in Ellis's eyes, and their standing in the light of our newer

[1] See, in the interesting, if uneven, *Today and Tomorrow Series*, Prof. H. S. Jennings' booklet, *Prometheus, or Biology and the Advancement of Man.*

knowledge, do not affect at all the position from which I have viewed them: namely, their significance in his development of a *Weltanschauung*, a creative attitude toward life.

IV

The early books of Ellis seem to follow, consciously or intuitively, a definite plan. *The New Spirit* states an attitude toward the universe, studying its exemplification in a selected number of personalities. *The Criminal* and *The Nationalisation of Health* provide for that spirit a sound biological foundation, a perfect social background. In *Man And Woman*, 1894, we have the first definite sexual study by Ellis, though certainly not the first intimation of Ellis's interest in the subject. Man and woman thus emerge from the potential paradise of the mind and body.

Man And Woman was deliberately planned, as far back as 1880 or 1881, as an Introduction to the future sex studies. In this short Introduction Ellis had meant to dispose of all the differences that are not in the narrow sense sexual; certainly its extent was not to be greater than that of a small pamphlet. By the time the first edition was ready for inclusion in his *Contemporary Science Series*, some thirteen years after, the material had grown into a fat book. In its latest (fifth) revision, it presents the fullest and most elaborate critical discussion of the secondary and, as Ellis calls them, tertiary, sexual characters.

The importance of *Man And Woman*, aside from its investigation into the structural differences between the

sexes and the consequent difference of response to stimuli, lies in its unwillingness to accept the conventional distinctions. Men and women, it seems, are more alike than we have been taught to consider them. Many of the differences that are supposed to be rooted in sex are really sourced in social history and attitude.

Woman, it appears, has been tinged by

the unavoidable duplicity of conflicting ideals that made her on the one hand an angel and on the other an idiot. The eighteenth century in Europe, and more especially in England and in France, brought its rationalism to bear upon the woman-and-man question; it was aided strongly by the economic revaluation that was drawing women from their homes and men from their independent and intermittent labour. A new industrial régime was emerging by which work became organized in the large centres, and the introduction of machinery enabled men and women to work side by side at the same or closely allied occupations. This is still going on today. It is also being recognized as reasonable that both sexes should study side by side at the school and at the college, and where not side by side, still in closely similar fashion, while the recreations of each sex are to some extent becoming common to both. Such conditions have tended to remove artificial sex differences, and have largely obliterated the coarser signs of superiority which may before have been possessed by one sex over another. It began in the lower and more mechanical fields of labour; it is proceeding to the higher and more specialized forms. Women have entered, or are about to enter, the various learned professions, and are tending to acquire the same rights of citizenship as men.

As such social changes tend more and more to abolish artificial sexual differences, thus acting inversely to the well-marked tendency observed in passing from the lower to the higher races,

we are brought face to face with the consideration of those differences which are not artificial, and which no equalisation of social conditions can entirely remove, the natural characters and predispositions which will always inevitably influence the sexual allotment of human activities. So long as women are unlike in the primary sexual characters and in reproductive function they can never be absolutely alike even in the highest psychic process.

Woman, on the whole, displays less tendency to vary from type than does man. She is, biologically, nearer to nature and to the child. She is, again biologically, the great conservative; but in this connection we are to remember that

This conclusion must not . . . be misunderstood. A cosmic conservatism does not necessarily involve a social conservatism. The wisdom of Man, working through a few centuries in one corner of the earth, by no means necessarily corresponds to the wisdom of Nature, and may be in flat opposition to it. This is especially the case when the wisdom of Man merely means, as sometimes happens, the experience of our ancestors gained under other conditions, or merely the opinions of one class or one sex. Taking a broad view of the matter, it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that it is safer to trust to the conservatism of Nature than to the conservatism of Man. We are not at liberty to introduce any artificial sexual barrier into social concerns. The respective fitness of men and women for any kind of work or any kind of privilege can only be ascertained by actual open experiment; and as the conditions for such experiment are never twice the same, it can never be positively affirmed that anything has been settled once and for all. When such experiment is successful, so much the better for the race; when it is unsuccessful, the minority who have broken the natural law alone suffer. An exaggerated anxiety lest natural law be overthrown

is misplaced. The world is not so insecurely poised. We may preserve an attitude of entire equanimity in the face of social readjustment. Such readjustment is either the outcome of wholesome natural instinct, in which case our social structure will be strengthened and broadened, or it is not; and if not, it is unlikely to become organically ingrained in the species.

Olive Schreiner used to speak of Ellis's "silent passivity." This passage and the one I am about to quote illustrate it perfectly. These two excerpts could, in the mouth of a "radical" orator, be made to sound like dynamite at the foundations of society; in Ellis they are as the flowing waters of the river of life. For it is like Ellis to wash, not blast, error away. I give now the closing paragraph of his book, in which he sums it up. Notice that the concluding lines of an Ellis book, no matter how scientific the text has been, always rise into a quiet eloquence.

Our investigation, therefore, shows us in what state of mind we ought to approach the whole problem; it can scarcely be said that it gives us the definite solution of definite problems. It is not on that account fruitless. There is distinct advantage in clearing away, so far as we can, the thick undergrowth of prepossession and superstition which flourishes in the region we have traversed to a greater extent that in any other region. It is something to have asked the right question, and to be set on the right road. It is something, also, to realise that we may disregard the assertions, or even the facts, of those who have not faced all the difficulties that must be encountered. At the very least it seems impossible to follow the paths we have here traversed without gaining a more vivid and tolerant insight into what for us must always be the two most interesting beings in the world.

Woman, it seems, has been the leader in the evolutional process. "In the saying with which Goethe closed his 'Faust' lies a biological verity not usually suspected by those who quote it." It is because woman is nearer, biologically, to the child that she represents more nearly than man the human type to which man is approximating. For "the progress of our race has been a progress in youthfulness." The *Ewig Weibliche* of Goethe, then, might, with Ellis's statement in mind, be paraphrased to read

Das ewig Kindliche zieht uns hinan

So that once again a scriptural phrase is aureoled in a distinctly secular glow. "And a little child shall lead you." The child appears, not only as father to the man, but as father to mankind.

Man And Woman, then, is the prelude to *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, which are to be inaugurated in 1897 with the first volume, *Sexual Inversion*. We shall see, in the proper place, with what strange gratitude and appreciation Ellis's native England greeted the *Studies*.

V

Of the magazine articles written during this period, one in particular should claim our attention for its importance as a pioneer effort in the direction of a scientific aesthetics. *The Colour-Sense in Literature* was published in the *Contemporary Review*, May, 1896. Later it was followed up by articles on *The Psychology of Red* and *The Psychology of Yellow* (in the *Popular Science*

Monthly, August-September, 1900, and May, 1906, respectively). What Ellis attempted to do was, from a study of the favorite colors of writers in different tongues and ages, to discover what relevancy might exist between a certain type and a certain predilection. The statistical tables that chart his earliest tentative results range from the Bible to D'Annunzio. The results themselves seem to show that green or blue characterizes the poet of nature, that red and its synonyms denote an absorbing interest in man and woman, while black, white and perhaps yellow reveal a preoccupation with one's inner vision. The uses for the color test in literary study are indicated by the author. First, as an instrument for investigating a writer's psychology, "by defining the nature of his aesthetic colour-vision. When we have ascertained a writer's colour formula, and his colours of predilection, we can tell at a glance, simply and reliably, something about his view of the world which pages of description could only tell us with uncertainty." Second, as an aid toward the attainment of a scientific aesthetic, "by furnishing a means of comparative study. . . . It is easy to dogmatise when you think you are safe from the evidence of precise tests. But here is a reasonably precise test."

It is essential to see how, in all these early books and articles, the author is ever on guard against the guiles of a merely resonant wordiness, — against a substitution of impressive rhetoric and sonorous speculation for sound thinking and feeling.[1] Whatever is amenable to test and

[1] In this connection it is worth while indicating a fine passage in one of Ellis's most obscure, yet by no means negligible, articles. In *Time*,

tabulation he patiently summarizes as a necessary precaution. In this quest of the essential fact he is ready, as we shall see from his experiments with drugs, to turn his own body into a laboratory. Not even in his moments of mysticism does he relinquish this grip upon grosser reality. Always the "new body" remains homogeneous with the "new spirit." Always the philosopher, the poet, the scientist, the artist, go hand in hand.

As Ellis lives through the red eighteen eighties in an individualism tempered but not shaped by the prevailing Socialism, so he lives through the yellow eighteen nineties in his personal fashion. Though close to one of the high priests of the era, a contributor to *The Savoy*, which is edited by his friend Arthur Symons, he is yet independent alike of the *Yellow Book* group and of the *fin de siècle* writers of the later magazine. Amid the economic awakening and the aesthetic decadence he preserves a classical equanimity that appreciates the values inherent in all genuine selfhood, whether in the economic or the artistic sphere.

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for December, 188 , he wrote of *The Present Position of English Criticism*, rejecting any purely objective method, and pointing out some of the weaknesses inherent in Matthew Arnold and Taine. It remains true, he remarks, in the course of a consideration of Arnold's prose, "that an intense preoccupation with style is almost invariably detrimental to the finest criticism. The critic's business is not to say beautiful things. It is his business to take hold of his subject with the largest and firmest grasp, to express from it its most characteristic essence." In this same article he anticipates, by some twelve years, an idea advanced by John M. Robertson in his stimulating book entitled *New Essays Toward a Critical Method*. "So long as we ignore the individuality of the critic," writes Ellis, "the personal equation of criticism will never come out right. Perhaps every critic ought to prefix a criticism of himself to his writings. . . ."

During the years that follow upon his marriage and include his books previous to the sex studies Ellis makes a number of journeys to foreign countries. In 1894 he goes on a solitary visit to Italy, primarily for the International Medical Congress, where on the strength of *The Criminal* he was appointed by his friend Lombroso a secretary to the Section of Psychiatry. He performed no secretarial duties, however; rather he wandered for ever about, fascinated especially by classic Rome. Two years later, after an interlude in Spain, he is in Moscow for the same Congress, taking in Bayreuth and *Parsifal* on the way. Ellis, on several of these continental tours, was accompanied by Arthur Symons. In these experiences must be sourced not a little of the material for his studies in national psychology. With the exception of the book on British genius, these still await book publication.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Sex Studies — The Bedborough Trial

I

TOWARD the end of 1897 there appeared, over the imprint of The University Press, Watford, London, the first volume in a series that was destined to be received as the chief contribution of the era to the study of sexual psychology. It was entitled *Sexual Inversion.*[1] Before its publication in England, indeed, it had been translated into German by Dr. Kurella, a distinguished physician and anthropologist, and published at Leipzig. In England, however, the initial reception was that of a contribution to social degeneration. Before long the author, Havelock Ellis, was being hailed, not as a scientist, not as an artist of life, but as a perverter of the public morality. The book, metaphorically and even literally, was burned; the reputation of publisher and author alike was handed over to the tender and percipient mercies of the public prosecutor.

It was the year 1898, in Merrie England. On May 31st, 1898, Mr. George Bedborough had been arrested for selling to a disguised detective a copy of the book, *Sexual Inversion.* He was charged before Sir John

[1] The reader should note that this is the *second* volume of the series as finally brought out in the United States by F. A. Davis, Philadelphia. (1900–1910.)

Bridge at the Bow Street Police Court with "publishing an obscene libel" (which in non-legal English means circulating an indecent work) "with the intention of corrupting the morals of her Majesty's subjects." Mr. Bedborough was in no way responsible for the publication of the book; he was simply the seller.

The book had been sold under rare circumstances. "By the evidence of the police themselves the sale of the book was effected in a private house, with closed doors, and . . . neither the book in question nor any other books were exposed for sale, or announced for sale, in the window or elsewhere. No commercial transaction could conveniently be effected with less publicity. So that if the sale of my book could be regarded as improper under such circumstances, there were practically no circumstances under which it could be well regarded as proper. Thus, although the police took no direct action against the author, publishers, and printers of the book, the effect of their action was calculated to be as fatal to the book as though they had proceeded directly against its producers." [1]

Mr. Bedborough's counsel, Mr. Avory (now a Judge) declared that he was prepared to answer for the scientific character of the book, after which the defendant was committed for trial. Bail was at first refused, but finally accepted in the sum of two sureties for 500 pounds. The contrast between this large sum and the much smaller

[1] The quotation and those immediately following, are from a pamphlet privately printed, in 1898, for distribution among Ellis's friends. It is called *A Note on The Bedborough Trial*, by Havelock Ellis. It is on this pamphlet and on private letters that my account of the proceedings is based.

ones for even dangerous criminals was in itself illuminating. "This is a tribute to the awe which surrounds ideas, and may well be gratifying to those who live much in the world of ideas. I should add that the incriminated passages, when read out in court, proved to be such simple statements of fact, mostly from the early life of the cases of inversion recorded in the volume, and my responsibility for them merely lay in the fact that I judged them to contain, in bald, uncoloured language, the minimum of definite physical fact required in such a book, if it is to possess any serious scientific value at all. When, however, three months later, the indictment was finally issued, it appeared that the whole book, from the first page to the last, 'and every line in such pages,' was charged as 'wicked, lewd, impure, scandalous and obscene.' It was solely on this ground, and not on any alleged impropriety in the method of sale, that the charge was founded."

Mr. Bedborough was more than a bookseller; he was a member of a small group, the Legitimation League, who were doing pioneer service, advocating legal reforms in matters of sex and seeking especially to remove the stigma from the illegitimate child. At once a defense fund was raised to fight the case. The trial was set for October 31st at historic Old Bailey. Unfortunately, the fight on principle was not to be waged. Owing to circumstances presently to be described, Bedborough, caught in the confusion of events, was compelled to plead guilty to part of the charge. He was now doubly a victim of mischance and it would hardly have advanced the cause for him to embrace a sterile martyrdom. He took his action, it is true, without consulting those whose sup-

port he had accepted. Even today, however, Ellis justifies Mr. Bedborough's course and is on friendly terms with him.

The publisher and Ellis were duly represented by counsel, but counsel, innocently involved in the confusion, was unable to speak in their defense. "Thus, although my book was the real subject of the trial, there was no legal opportunity to be heard on its behalf."

Arose then a legal luminary to slay this Ellis, this serpent of immorality. "You might at the outset, perhaps," he fulminated, "have been gulled into the belief that somebody might say that this was a scientific book. But it is impossible for anybody with a head on his shoulders to open the book without seeing that it is a pretence and a sham, and that it is merely entered into for the purpose of selling this filthy publication."

Remember those words and the man who spoke them and the book he spoke of and the author of the book. The speaker was Sir Charles Hall, Recorder of London; the book he thus cast into the sewer was *Sexual Inversion;* the author of the book was Havelock Ellis. The defendant, having pleaded guilty, was released on his own recognizances.

Of course any one who has read the book in question will appreciate how ridiculous was this pompous and vacuous indictment. One may speculate upon the possible relation between the passion with which it was attacked and the prevalence, in England, of homosexuality. On the score of the book, in fact, Ellis has been without any reason suspected of what, in any case, is surely an affliction or an abnormality rather than a crime. The sus-

picion, ironically enough, is the reward of Ellis's scientific toleration; humane sympathy and understanding have been, as so often happens, mistaken for identity.

The pamphlet in which Ellis explained, rather than defended himself is so difficult of access, and some of the material so important for its general outlook as well as for its autobiographic illumination, that I transcribe a few salient passages. In the first, Ellis explains the nature of his work. Recall that we are in late Victorian England; yet the words have a distinct relevancy for the "Calvin"-istic United States, anno Domini 1926, where, it is true, Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* are published, but only for the medical and legal profession.[1]

I may here briefly state the general character of the book. It is the more necessary to do so since no undue publicity has been sought, and the book was so little known before these proceedings were taken, except to specialists, that the majority of my own friends had never heard of it until they saw it proclaimed as "obscene" in the police news of every London newspaper.

Sexual Inversion, published at the end of the year 1897, is the first volume of a series of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, which I projected over twenty years back, and which I have ever since had before my mind, as the serious and vitally important subject to which the best energies of my life should be devoted. The work will extend to five or six volumes, and although this first volume discusses a form of perverted sexuality, the *Studies*, as a whole, will deal mainly with the normal sex impulse. It should be needless to point out the magnitude and the importance

[1] By what legal and medical fiction the members of these professions are supposed to be immune from the snares of sexual aberration, I know not; I know only that I consider the immunity largely fictional, and can see no reason why the volumes should be withheld from any responsible adult reader. Of this, however, more on a later page.

of the problems arising in such an investigation; in this first volume, moreover, we are brought face to face with a practical question which is constantly demanding attention, both in society and the law courts. Whatever diffidence one may feel in approaching questions of this nature, there should be no doubt as to the necessity of so doing provided we approach them seriously.

How seriously I approached this great subject may be judged, not only from the long period of labour and preparation spent on the work, but from the fact that I occupied several years in the merely preliminary task of attempting to clear the ground by inquiring into the psychological and anthropological secondary sexual differences of the sexes, the main results of this special inquiry appearing in 1894 under the title of *Man And Woman*. . . . In its final English shape it expresses my most mature convictions on the subject it treats; the opinion of judicious friends had been obtained at doubtful points, and every sentence carefully weighed. Errors of fact or opinion may possibly be found, but there is not a word which on moral grounds I feel any reason to regret or withdraw. Any question of retractation or apology could not, therefore, possibly arise; it would be a kind of intellectual suicide.

It has been supposed by many who have never seen the book that I have attempted to popularise the study of sexual questions, and to make widely known the results obtained by other investigators. That is altogether a mistake. The book is founded on original data, and contains the first collection of cases of sexual inversion, unconnected with the prison or the asylum, which has ever been obtained in England; it is written in bald and technical language, published at a high price; and having been announced and sent for review only in special medical and scientific quarters, its existence was practically unknown to the general reader until these proceedings were initiated. There may well be, I know, a question as to the value of cloistered virtues, as to the worthiness of that innocence which is merely ignorance and

vanishes at a breath, as to the rights of every adult person to full knowledge of the sexual facts of life. But that question is not raised by my work. I appealed only to doctors, to psychologists, to those concerned with medico-legal matters, and to the handful of thinkers who are interested in the social bearings of the physical and psychic problems of life. By such my work has been accepted — so far as I know at present without exception — in the serious spirit in which it was put forward. Every alienist of distinction whose opinion I have obtained has assured me of his belief in the importance of the subject, and of his sense of the scientific tone and temper in which I have dealt with it. Every medical journal in half a dozen countries which has reviewed the book has without exception judged it favourably, and not one has suggested that I have been guilty of the slightest impropriety. I may indeed say that the medical support I have received has often been rather on moral than on scientific grounds; it has repeatedly been remarked that an English tone of reticence distinguishes this book from the other works on the same subject by continental writers. The numerous letters of gratitude for the work, and strong support of its objects, which have reached me from thinkers and social reformers, men and women, I refrain from more than mentioning; they have sufficed to show me that the aim and nature of my task are appreciated by the small class of people whom, in addition to medical readers, I have alone sought to address.

How deeply discerning were the Recorder's words concerning the desire of the writer or the publisher to sell "this filthy publication" may be seen from Ellis's prompt action in suspending the sale of the book. To this he readily won the publishers' consent. They could have reaped a fair harvest of sales through the publicity given to the book by the police; this was, however, a

form of advertisement from which Ellis had no desire to profit. When, subsequently, he made up his mind not to publish the remaining volumes of the series in England, many of his friends looked upon that decision as a confession of defeat. To these he gave his reasons:

Intelligent spectators of life have declared that this prosecution of a book-seller for selling a purely scientific work will mark an epoch so far as our country is concerned. It has acted as a *reductio ad absurdum*, they say; it has quickened the public conscience to a finer sense of what is fitting in these matters. Henceforth public opinion will be strong enough to check at the outset any foolish interference of the police with scientific discussion. Just as a police charge of "blasphemy," which twenty years ago was a real and serious charge, would today only arouse a smile, so, it is said, never again could a scientific book, issued and sold as this was, be dragged into the mire of the courts as "obscene," or a reputable citizen who sold such a book be haled before the magistrate on a charge of "corrupting the morals" of his fellow subjects.

It may be so. I would gladly believe that any action of mine had assisted my countrymen to win that intellectual freedom which is already possessed by every other civilised country except Russia. But no one can give any guarantee that such will be the fact, and life is too short to enable me to wait another twenty years to verify the prophecy.

It must be remembered that so far as an author is concerned the injury done by such a prosecution is done in the act of bringing it. The manifold chances that befall a book on any highly specialised and technical subject, when submitted to a judge and jury, may or may not lead to the justification of the author. The injury is already done. The anxiety and uncertainty produced by so infamous a charge on a man and on those who belong to him, the risk of loss of friends, the pecuniary damages,

the proclamation to the world at large, which has never known and will never know the grounds on which the accusation is made, that an author is to be classed with the purveyors of literary garbage — this power is put into the hands of any meddlesome member of that sad class against which the gods themselves are powerless.

The mere expectation of such a prosecution is fatal. In submitting to these conditions an author puts his publishers and printer and their agents into an unmerited position of danger; he risks the distortion of his own work while it is in progress; and when he has written a book which is approved by the severest and most competent judges he is tempted to adapt it to the vulgar tastes of the policeman.

How real the danger is to which an author, in submitting to these conditions of publication, subjects the distributors of his book, we have an object lesson in the present case. Here is a man who, in his leisure time, edits and publishes a magazine with the object of discussing social questions of the gravest importance. Yet when such a man sells in an almost private manner a few copies of a book written by another man, with whose aims and objects he probably has little in common, the whole responsible machinery of social order is, at the public expense, set in action to crush him. Such is the risk to which an author subjects the mere distributors of his book.

This is a risk to others, and a domination over myself, which I at all events have no intention of submitting to. In this country it is a sufficiently hard task for any student to deal with the problems of sex, even under the most favourable circumstances. He already, as it were, carries his life in his hands. He has entered a field which is largely given over to faddists and fanatics, to ill-regulated minds of every sort. He must, at the same time, be prepared to find that the would-be sagacity of imbeciles counts him the victim of any perversion he may investigate. Even from well-balanced and rational persons he must at first meet

with a certain amount of distrust and opposition. To encounter this inevitable and legitimate opposition, and to preserve his serenity and equipoise, is itself a sufficient strain on any man. It would be foolish to place oneself as well beneath the censure of an ignorant and too zealous police official, and to accept the chain of uncertain evils, and the certain public stigma, which a prosecution necessarily involves.

Moreover, it must be noted, the police naturally desire that their intervention shall be successful, and it is their interest to prejudice matters by discrediting the object of their attack. This was ingeniously done in the present case by proceeding against a book-seller who was in no way connected with the production of the incriminated book, or in any way concerned with the scientific questions it discussed, but who was intimately connected with a society and a magazine devoted to the open and popular propaganda of unconventional views on marriage, matters with which I, on my side, had no connection. Thus in every newspaper a stain of prejudice is affixed to an author or a book, not to be wiped off by any subsequent explanation, and for which no compensation can ever be obtained.

Under these circumstances, therefore, the difficulties of publishing the remaining volumes of my *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* in England are sufficiently obvious, and the decision I have been forced to reach seems inevitable. To wrestle in the public arena for freedom of speech is a noble task which may worthily be undertaken by any man who can devote to it the best energies of his life. It is not, however, a task which I have ever contemplated. I am a student, and my path has long been marked out. I may be forced to pursue it under unfavourable conditions, but I do not intend that any consideration shall induce me to swerve from it, nor do I intend to injure my work or distort my vision of life by entering upon any struggle. The pursuit of the martyr's crown is not favourable to the critical and dispassionate investigation of complicated problems. A stu-

dent of nature, of men, of books, may dispense with wealth or position; he cannot dispense with quietness and serenity. I insist on doing my own work in my own way, and cannot accept conditions which make this work virtually impossible. Certainly I regret that my own country should be almost alone in refusing to me the conditions of reasonable intellectual freedom. I regret it the more since I deal with the facts of English life and prefer to address English people. But I must leave to others the task of obtaining the reasonable freedom that I am unable to attain.

As the motto of his pamphlet, Ellis selected, for the instruction of the petty puritans, a passage from the *Areopagitica* of a great Puritan. It has remained the motto, not of a pamphlet, but of a life.

The blow of the trial did not slay Ellis, but it cut him. *The Note on the Bedborough Trial*, tempered in language as it is and moderate in tone, is yet one of the few instances in which Ellis has spoken in any but calmly philosophical terms. How the episode affected his wife and him at the time is to be guessed from Edith Ellis's account in her short essay upon her husband. Long after the trial, she notes that the malice and gossip-mongering have not yet subsided. It even happened by a crowning irony that in America, years later, a judge in the court of morals dismissed a prisoner with a small fine on condition that " he read these very books burned twelve years ago in England."(!) Ellis himself, writing the Postscript to the *Studies* in 1910, ends with a reference to the early days:

It was perhaps fortunate for my peace that I failed at the outset to foresee all the perils that beset my path. I knew indeed

that those who investigate severely and intimately any object which men are accustomed to pass by on the other side let themselves open to misunderstanding and even obloquy. But I supposed that a secluded student who approached vital social problems with precaution, making no direct appeal to the general public, but only to the public's teachers, and who wrapped up the results of his inquiries in technically written volumes open to few, I supposed that such a student was at all events secure from any gross form of attack on the part of the police or the government under whose protection he imagined that he lived. That proved to be a mistake. When only one volume of these *Studies* had been written and published in England, a prosecution, instigated by the government, put an end to the sale of that volume in England, and led me to resolve that the subsequent volumes should not be published in my own country. I do not complain. I am grateful for the early and generous sympathy with which my work was received in Germany and the United States, and I recognize that it has had a wider circulation, both in English and the other chief languages of the world, than would have been possible by the modest method of issue which the government of my country induced me to abandon. Nor has the effort to crush my work resulted in any change in that work by so much as a single word. With help, or without it, I have followed my path to the end. . . . He who follows in the steps of Nature after a law that was not made by man, and is above and beyond man, has time as well as eternity on his side, and can afford to be both patient and fearless. Men die, but the ideas they seek to kill live.

As this book draws to its completion, some twenty-eight years after the Bedborough Trial, I receive from Mr. Bedborough an important statement that throws new light upon an old darkness. I transcribe it from the orig-

inal document, just as it stands in its impersonal language. The stage-villain, "Dr. de Villiers," was introduced to Ellis at the time as a perfectly correct and suitable publisher for his volume. It may be worth while mentioning that the detective who tracked the impostor down, — Mr. Sweeney, — afterward wrote a book about the extraordinary character.

Mr. Bedborough's statement is dated December 1st, 1925.[1]

There never was any connection between H.E. and the Legitimation League. But as the Secretary of the latter, Mr. George Bedborough, was prosecuted for selling the first volume of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* it may be well to get some insight into this society's principles and history.

Miss Lillian Harman, of Chicago, was president of the Legitimation League whose primary object was, as its name implies, the legitimating of illegitimate children. Opinions were divided as to whether all children or only acknowledged children should be legitimatized: the President and Secretary stood for the complete obliteration of every stigma attaching to a child because of its birth. This basic principle naturally carried its adherents a long way, but most of the members of the society were aiming at reform of the marriage laws. Divorce by mutual consent seemed a revolutionary proposal in 1897–8. Today it is the law of a number of states in Europe and America. The organ of the Legitimation League was a monthly journal called *The Adult*. It was the pioneer of an outspokenness which is too common nowadays to be universally criticized although even today one hears of puritanical opposition to sex-plays specially frank in expression.

[1] Prepared especially for this book.

H.E. did not write for *The Adult*, in fact one of its contributors objected to H.E.'s descriptions of certain cases of sexual inversion. Mr. Bedborough, however, has himself been a constant admirer of H.E.'s genius and there was nothing strange in the fact that amongst the numerous sex books on sale at the Legitimation League's bookstall were a few copies of *Sexual Inversion.*

It should be said that the League's so-called "offices" were merely the private living-rooms of Mr. Bedborough and his family, the public meetings being held at the great St. James's Hall and the well-known Holborn Restaurant. Some very famous people were members, including the late Mr. Grant Allen, author of *The Woman Who Did.*

It has been publicly stated by the Scotland Yard Inspector who took a prominent part in the prosecution of Mr. Bedborough, that the police had for a long time been "looking for an opening," in order that they might stop what they considered an objectionable movement. They could not find it in the mere propaganda of freer marriage laws. They found it in the sale of H.E.'s *Psychology of Sex.*

H.E. and Mr. Bedborough equally regretted that a perfectly proper agitation for a reform of the marriage laws should be prejudiced by its connection with a perfectly sound scientific treatise which had no sort of propagandist object in its publication. And exactly similarly they were exceedingly sorry that the latter publication, in itself sufficiently novel and frank to require circumspection in its sale, should be prejudiced by its apparent connection with a movement it had nothing to do with.

The fact that Mr. Bedborough's "bookstall" included one or two copies of this book was sheer accident — arising from the coincidence that the "University Press" of Watford printed and published both *The Adult* and the prosecuted volume of H.E.

The mere name "University Press" was a misnomer for which Mr. Bedborough and H.E. suffered considerable prejudice, but with neither responsibility nor wish on their part. This high-sounding title was one of a long series of names under which "Dr. de Villiers" traded. It was not the name of the printer to whom H.E. entrusted this important work, but it was difficult if not impossible to cancel arrangements which had gone on for years, merely on account of an alteration in the trade-name of a printer.

Mr. Bedborough's explanation of his plea of "guilty" to the charge of selling this book has always been accepted by his friends, including H.E., as perfectly honorable and reasonable, although the decision had certain unforeseen results.

Mr. Bedborough's own business was ruined by his arrest and prosecution. He had spent a lot of money on the movement, and was now under the necessity of earning a livelihood. The long-drawn-out trial extending over four months added to his difficulties. He knew that whatever the result of the trial H.E. was quite determined to withdraw this book and this series of books from the power of English police interference. Mr. Bedborough received a direct assurance from Scotland Yard that they would be contented with a barren admission of fault in regard to the book. As far as the free marriage and divorce agitation was concerned the subject was hardly again mentioned, and Mr. Bedborough felt that the movement for which he primarily stood had won a real victory. This victory was none the less genuine because its importance was hidden in the general indignation against a condemnation of H.E.'s important work.

Another of Mr. Bedborough's reasons was his distrust of Dr. de Villiers. Apart from the objectionable pretentiousness of the name of the University Press (there is no university, of course, at Watford) Mr. Bedborough detected Dr. de Villiers in some exceedingly unfriendly meannesses, and underhand dealings, all

aimed at connecting Bedborough with businesses he knew nothing about.

The end of the trial left everybody gasping. The Bedborough Committee of Defense instructed their lawyers to continue to defend H.E.'s book. Mr. Bedborough himself instructed the same lawyers to carry out the compromise he had arranged with the prosecution. The lawyers were waiting in the hall of the Old Bailey — waiting — unable to solve the riddle of their contradictory instructions. In the end Mr. Bedborough conducted his own case, thus throwing overboard his committee and the lawyers who had remained faithful to those who had engaged them and paid them. As far as H.E. was concerned the case was no longer important to him personally although like other citizens he regarded the verdict and still more the judge's comments, as a reflection on our national reputation for sense, fairness and enlightenment. Mr. Bedborough went abroad, accepting an engagement as a teacher and lecturer in a German college.

Dr. de Villiers seemed to lose his head. With considerable venom and utter unscrupulousness he made serious attacks on the Defense Committee's lawyers. Mr. Bedborough who alone could have exculpated these people heard nothing of the attack until he returned a few years later to England. . . .

The real name of de Villiers was George Ferdinand Springmuhl Von Weissenfeld — a German and the son of an eminent judge. For many years since coming to England he had lived in luxury purchased by extraordinary swindles. He had already served a twelve-months sentence in London for perjury in connection with a fraud. He was again prosecuted but escaped the police, and began a new career — his wife now appearing as his millionaire-sister. He registered company after company, each one failing after it had netted many thousands of pounds for its sole promoter. He was all the directors of all his companies, as

well as their officials and managers. His aliases were innumerable. He actually had so many separate banking accounts that he had to keep a "Who's Who and Where," of his own. In his possession at the time of his arrest was found a complete list of his various names with specimen signatures and details of the uses each had been put to. He had now built a house near Cambridge, between four roads, with an underground passage leading to each thoroughfare. He was arrested inside the secret passage behind an apparently solid fire-place. With the air of melodrama which was never far from his ordinary manner, he produced a loaded revolver which was secured by a detective after a struggle. He poisoned himself from a finger ring while the handcuffs held his wrists. His wife, probably a perfectly innocent party, and two very subordinate office-clerks were sentenced to an imprisonment they almost certainly did not deserve.

Another interesting sidelight on "de Villiers" is thrown by a letter from Ellis, dated December 28, 1925. The fellow was "a curious figure," he tells me, "by no means an ordinary scoundrel. He had good points, but a curious mental twist, and a love of mystification even apart from his personal interests. Thus, in the magazine he edited and published he wrote an article giving an account of an institution in a remote part of Mexico for bringing up children from infancy completely away from all the influence of society — putting this forward with all the air of a bonafide narrative. In appearance and movement he gave very much the suggestion of a large and stealthy cat. My wife, before we knew anything to his disadvantage, felt, instinctively, something very strange and uncanny about him."

The *Studies* as a whole I shall consider in a later chap-

ter. They are a synthesis of the man. During the years in which he was completing them (1900–1910) he wrote a number of other volumes that now claim our attention. These are *Affirmations*, 1898; *The Nineteenth Century*, 1900; *A Study of British Genius*, 1904, and *The Soul of Spain*, 1908.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Affirmations — A Century Summarized — British Genius — Spain

I

AFFIRMATIONS, virtually, is a ripened continuation of *The New Spirit*. In it Ellis, studying Nietzsche, Casanova, Zola, Huysmans, St. Francis and others, reveals five aspects of the complex but harmonious personality that is himself. That the same man should be able to feel an unforced interest in men so disparate is obvious testimony of what I may call a certain spiritual versatility. Eclecticism is a word that too often has denoted a refined superficiality; yet in the deeper sense, Ellis is, precisely, an eclectic who inclines rather to skepticism than to syncretism. His selection becomes, thereby, not a meaningless mosaic of mannerisms, but the harmonious pattern of a significant soul. In the end, of course, nothing matters; until that end, however, nothing becomes almost synonymous with everything. *Affirmations*, as much as a book about the men whose names adorn its chapters, is a book about Havelock Ellis. "Our own affirmations are always the best." In that simple line from his Preface is implicit almost a program of creative eclecticism. In the studies that follow it becomes explicit. Each of the studies, moreover, comes in the na-

ture of a pioneer offering. That on Nietzsche, which appeared originally in *The Savoy*, in 1896, was virtually the first [1] to introduce the great figure to English readers; it remains one of the most balanced treatments of a great, if unbalanced, mind. The Casanova is almost astounding in its grasp of an antipodal nature. Not only is it one of the great essays on the "Chevalier"; it is one of the sagest essays that our contemporary letters may boast, — an appreciation fairly classical for its depth of insight and firm grace of expression, transcending its subject and embodying a principle of life. The Zola and Huysmans essays are each, in a different sense, incomplete. They consider these men at a time when the relation between them was closer than it appears in the light of Huysman's later work. The essay on Zola is based chiefly on Ellis's

[1] Technically, the first was the late Thomas Common, who issued, in a semi-private manner, a translation of a portion of "*Zarathustra*," with a short and unimportant paper about Nietzsche. Ellis's is the first long and serious attempt in English to study Nietzsche as a whole. On its appearance, Frau Förster-Nietzsche (sister of the writer) wrote Ellis an appreciative letter saying that though even where she did not feel quite able to agree, his view still deserved serious consideration.

"Nietzsche was known only to the few who read German at the beginning of the decade, but before the death of the old century the first attempt at a complete edition of the works of Friedrich Nietzsche was made by Henry & Co. The enterprise, however, aroused so little interest that it was abandoned after the production of four volumes. It was not until 1896 that any general interest in Nietzsche's ideas began in this country. In that year Havelock Ellis contributed a study of the German philosopher to *The Savoy*, and there were several other notices and criticisms in the reviews. The earliest reference to Nietzsche in the literature of the period is to be found in George Egerton's *Keynotes* (1892), but there are several pages devoted to his ideas in the *Sentences and Paragraphs* of John Davidson (1893), who seems to have been the only writer of the time to have come directly under the spell of the Nietzschean philosophy." Holbrook Jackson, *The Eighteen Nineties*; revised edition, 1922; page 129.

reflections during the translation of *Germinal;* at the time he knew little about the man's labors and felt no special interest in him. Huysmans, on the contrary, he knew thoroughly and studied deeply on the basis of everything the man had published up to the date of the essay. "But if I had waited till his death," Ellis has told me lately, "I should never have written it, for his later development and writings do not interest me at all." And if St. Francis closes a book that Nietzsche opens, that, too, is as it should be when human strivings are viewed from above the conflict of petty terminologies. For St. Francis could be hard, and the creator of the Superman bore his cross to the grave. The saint had come to asceticism over the path of license; the sinner, born of religious forbears, had traced the same path from the opposite direction. The same path, not divergent roads. "It seems to be too often forgotten," as Ellis has written in the essay on St. Francis, "that repression and license are two sides of the same fact. We can only attain a fine temperance through a fine freedom, even a fine excess."

Ellis's approach to Nietzsche is that, not of the social revolutionist, but of the calm psychologist. The Englishman is not overawed by the superman; he is deeply absorbed by the human-all-too-human in the German, and perhaps unconsciously, by that in Nietzsche which related him to Ellis. "He was an artist who regarded life as the highest art." And, a dozen pages later, "Nietzsche was by temperament a philosopher after the manner of the Greeks. In other words, philosophy was not to him, as to the average modern philosopher, a mat-

ter of books and the study, but a life to be saved. It seemed to him to have much less concern with 'truth' than with the essentials of fine living." In the famous quarrel between Nietzsche and Wagner he sees, as only a few have seen after him, that in presenting Wagner's case, the philosopher was really presenting "Nietzsche's case," and that both the early and the late Nietzsche were right.[1] "Most of the mighty quarrels that have sent men to the battle and the stake might have been appeased had each side recognized that both were right in their affirmations, both wrong in their denials." In Nietzsche, Ellis beholds the philosopher who is interested, not in structures but in details; not in systems but in the separate stones out of which they are builded. Nietzsche, in his knowledge that (in Ellis's words) "a man's philosophy, to be real, must be the inevitable outcome of his own psychic constitution," afforded the hint that his commentators were all too slow to appreciate. They were intent, for the most part, in erecting an image of a Blond Beast. Ellis, piercing to the psychological core, summed up Nietzsche, in a memorable phrase, as "the Pascal of paganism." It is in this essay, too, that through Nietzsche he reaches a definition of culture which lends to a word much abused a new vitality.

Nietzsche desires to prove nothing, and is reckless of consistency. He looks at every question that comes before him with the same simple, intent, penetrative gaze, and whether the aspects

[1] One of the few is G. A. Borgese, in *Studi di Letterature Moderne*, Milano, 1915. Nietzsche contra Wagner, in the Italian's opinion, might just as well have been called Nietzsche contra Nietzsche. Note that where the Italian establishes an antagonism Ellis discovers a deeper unity.

that he reveals are new or old, he seldom fails to bring us a fresh stimulus. Culture, as he understood it, consists for the modern man in the task of choosing the simple and indispensable things from the chaos of crude material which today overwhelms us. The man who will live at the level of the culture of his time is like the juggler who must keep a number of plates spinning in the air; his life must be a constant training in suppleness and skill so that he may be a good athlete. But he is also called upon to exert his skill in the selection and limitation of his task. Nietzsche is greatly occupied with the simplification of culture. He is for ever challenging the multifarious materials for culture, testing them with eye and hand; we cannot prove them too severely, he seems to say, nor cast aside too contemptuously the things that a real man has no need of for fine living. What must I do to be saved? What do I need for the best and fullest life? — that is the everlasting question that the teacher of life is called upon to answer. And we cannot be too grateful to Nietzsche for the stern penetration — the more acute for his ever-present sense of the limits of energy — with which he points from amid the mass to the things which most surely belong to our eternal peace.[1]

I would call attention, in passing, to Ellis's translation of sacred phrases into their secular equivalents, as, a few lines above, in the implied equation between religious salvation and the fulness of the good life. Except as historical and psychological terms, sacred and secular mean little to the man, as indeed, were humanity sufficiently evolved, the distinction between the terms would mean little to mankind. In Ellis, such a translation is always

[1] *Cf.* Ellis in *The Savoy* for October, 1896 (*Concerning Jude the Obscure*) "A man cannot be too keen in grasping at the things that concern himself, too relentless in flinging aside those things that for him at least have no concern."

the more literal version of what in the first case is a metaphor. So, too, the "kingdom of heaven is within," surely, when heaven means — as psychologically, it does — happiness, and when "within" is but a synonym for harmoniously developed self. For a man's real self, as Nietzsche "repeated so often, consists of the things which he has truly digested and assimilated; he must always 'conquer' his opinions; it is only such conquests which he has the right to report to men as his own." This is why so many self-styled disciples, pupils of Nietzsche, appear but as so many parodies. They report, not conquests of their own, but of the master; he has not taught them mastery, but has overmastered them. Nietzsche himself, as Ellis sees the man, through excessive sensitiveness to the commonplace in life, and deficiency in the sexual instinct, lost largely his place in the fellowship of the master spirits, those who seem more "real" to us. Yet one who so incarnated the spirit of independence remains, to me, as "real" as ever was Goethe; and, if I were compelled to choose between another Goethe on the one hand, and a Nietzsche on the other, the choice would fall on Nietzsche.

Now, if ever two men lived that were farther apart in thought and action than Casanova and Ellis, it is difficult to learn of them. Ellis could not be a Casanova if he would; he would not if he could. Yet who, among living critics, has better appreciated Casanova than the great Englishman? Speaking of the dubious things that Casanova had done, and of the ridiculous positions in which he found himself now and again, Ellis writes: "But as he looks back he feels that the like may have happened to

any of us. He views these things with complete human tolerance as a necessary part of the whole picture, which it would be idle to slur over or apologize for. He records them simply, not without a sense of humor, but with no undue sense of shame."

Is there not a point here at which Ellis, for all the differences that rise like a barrier between him and the self-styled Chevalier de Seingalt, achieves contact with the passionate adventurer? "There but for the grace of God go I," said a noted preacher, seeing a criminal led to execution. A profound sentence which preachers may utter, but only Ellises feel; a sentence containing enough dynamite to blow up the world of the censors and their insensate "moral" judgments.

He views these things with complete human tolerance as a necessary part of the whole picture, which it would be idle to slur over or apologize for. Can it mean nothing that Ellis, describing the antipodal Casanova, should so admirably describe himself?

When, seemingly, Ellis embraces opposites, he is in reality completing a whole. His tolerance is no mere codified indifferentism, although such an attitude has its philosophic justification. Neither is it the live-and-let-live of the weakling too lazy, too fearsome, to peep over his own particular hedge. It is, let us say, a panorama of the soul, a view of life not only from within but from above. It is, in the earlier, truer sense of the word, whole-some. Such a tolerance, as we shall see, breathes through the six volumes of the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. Even in the scientific field — and there is a presumptuous intolerance which science breeds in the minds

of men who do not measure up to its vastness — Ellis's tolerance is to be seen in his unwillingness to delimit the bounds between normality and abnormality. So, too, considering Casanova:

" What offenses against social codes he may have committed, Casanova can scarcely be said to have sinned against natural laws. He was only abnormal because so natural a person within the gates of civilization is necessarily abnormal and at war with his environment. Far from being the victim of morbidities and perversities, Casanova presents to us the natural man *in excelsis*." Ellis explains Casanova; he does not " judge " him. So doing, he explains us to ourselves. He insists that, although Casanova may have had a dulled moral sensibility, he possessed " a vigorous moral consciousness of his own." If we do not recognize this, we " misunderstand him altogether."

The peak of Ellis's essay, to me, is in the paragraph from which I take the following extract. It compresses into three lines a philosophy of life to which we are but slowly awakening:

> The energy and ability which Casanova displayed in gratifying his instincts would have sufficed to make a reputation of the first importance in any department, as a popular statesman, a great judge, a merchant prince, and enabled him to die worn out by the monotonous and feverish toil of the senate, the court, or the counting house. Casanova chose to LIVE. A crude and barbarous choice, it seems to us, with our hereditary instinct to spend our lives in wasting the reasons for living.

If poetry is anything more than mere tinkle of rhyme, that last line implies a great philosophic poem.

It is in the essay on Casanova that we find Ellis's statement of art as sublimation. It is characteristic of Ellis that this should be made in terms of completed circles. Quoting Schopenhauer to the effect that "whatever course of action we take in life there is always some element in our nature which could only find satisfaction in an exactly contrary course," (this is the "ambivalence" of the later psycho-analysts, is it not?), he evolves a sound theory of the fairy-tale for adults. The moralising force of art lies, "not in its capacity to present a timid imitation of our experiences, but in its power to go beyond our experience, satisfying and harmonising the unfulfilled activities of our nature. That art should have such an effect on those who contemplate it is not surprising when we find that, to some extent, art has a similar effect on its creators. . . . It has been said of Wagner that he had in him the instincts of an ascetic and of a satyr, and the first is just as necessary as the second to the making of a great artist."

We are prepared, then, for the view of the much-maligned Zola as a genuine moralist. For Ellis, "realist" (or "naturalist" or "decadent," or any other of the bugaboos that seek to pass as critical lashes) holds no profound meaning. "There is no absolute realism; only a variety of idealisms." Zola, far from fouling life, has taught us that "to the artist as to the moralist, nothing can be called common or unclean." If he has dwelt upon sex and the digestive process, he has but utilized the two central functions of life, hunger and love; what, without the symbols of food and love, becomes of religious ceremonial? Zola, too, enriched the language with deposits

from the lower strata — a thankless but an important task.

> Our own literature for two centuries has been hampered by the social tendency of life to slur expression, and to paraphrase or suppress all forceful and poignant words. If we go back to Chaucer, or even to Shakespeare, we realise what power of expression we have lost. It is enough, indeed, to turn to our English Bible. The literary power of the English Bible is largely due to the unconscious instinct for style which happened to be in the air when it was chiefly moulded, to the simple, direct, unashamed vigor of its speech. Certainly if the discovery of the Bible had been left for us to make, any English translation would have to be issued at a high price by some esoteric society, for fear lest it should fall into the hands of the British matron.

These words were written about thirty years ago. Today we have, perhaps, a slightly greater freedom in speech. For a freedom of expression properly comparable to free thinking (and is thinking anything if it be not altogether free?) we still must look to France. The franker American and English writers are still dominated — though with less effectiveness — by the inhabitants of what Ellis so picturesquely terms the " parlours and nurseries of our own country." The body yet remains all extremities; the center does not exist. And where we deny the central body, we have slain the core of life and of living. Is it surprising that some, in the intensity of their reaction, should be impelled to create a body all center?

Though Ellis early sought to adumbrate a scientific aestheticism, he is no partisan of what of late has tended to become a sort of behavioristic literary criticism, — a system with distinct overtones of Taine, Pavlov and the

American psychologist, Watson. "Yet we can by no means altogether account for Huysmans by race and environment. Every man of genius is a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth, unlike other men, seeing everything as it were at a different angle, mirroring the world in his mind as in those concave or convex mirrors which elongate or abbreviate absurdly all who approach them." For, "to be a leader of men one must turn one's back on men." Ellis insists that decadence is "an aesthetic, and not a moral conception."

The power of words is great, but they need not befool us. The classic herring should suggest no moral superiority over the decadent bloater. We are not called upon to air our moral indignation over the bass end of the musical clef. All confusion of intellectual substances is foolish, and one may well sympathise with that fervid unknown metaphysician to whom we owe the Athanasian creed when he went so far as to assert that it is damnable. . . . We may well reserve our finest admiration for the classic in art, for therein are included the largest and most imposing works of human skill; but our admiration is of little worth if it is founded on incapacity to appreciate the decadent. Each has its virtues, each is equally right and necessary.

For me, the central importance of the essay on Huysmans is the relation of an excerpt from Huysmans' *En Route* to Ellis's own practise. It presents unsurpassably, in Ellis's opinion, one of the secrets of the mystic:

There are two ways of ridding ourselves of a thing which burdens us, casting it away or letting it fall. To cast away requires an effort of which we may not be capable, to let fall imposes no labour, is simpler, without peril, within reach of all.

To cast away, again, implies a certain interest, a certain animation, even a certain fear; to let fall is absolute indifference, absolute contempt; believe me, use this method, and Satan will flee.

The passage doubtless struck the essayist because it corresponded so closely with Ellis's attitude. Many have missed, in Ellis, not the element of courage, but its outer aspect of pugnacity. Some have mistaken this trait for a lukewarmness, even a timidity, of the spirit. Ellis, however, is neither Laodicean nor coward. From the first, long before he knew of Huysmans or his novels, it has been his silent way not to "cast off," but to "let fall." Surely the greatest temptation came to him at the time of the Bedborough trial. It was the mock-Puritans, however, who cast him off, thus revealing the inner darkness of their impure souls; it was he who let them fall. (I say *mock-Puritans*. Between Ellis and the true Puritans, even in this crisis, was a reciprocal respect quite comparable to that which obtained between him and the Pagans.) Here was a perfect cleavage of social elements; Nature herself seems to have performed the classification.

In Ellis is a gift for controversy that he has often been sorely tempted to use; he is capable of a rapier thrust and a nastiness that stand sharply at variance with the equanimity of his printed pages. Controversy, however, he regards as a mistake. "It confers importance on things that have no importance. And I have no real pleasure in crushing an opponent." [1]

[1] See, as the only elaborate controversy that Ellis has entered, the appendix to *Man And Woman*, wherein he replies to Karl Pearson.

From St. Francis, Ellis derives the lesson not, as one superficially might suppose, of asceticism, but of alternation. "There would have been no Francis the saint if there had been no Francis the sinner." Life, as we had seen in his first book, is a physical and chemical tension; living is the alternate release and return of that tension.

It would seem that I speak of out-worn things, and that the problem of saintliness has little relation to the moral problems of our time. It is far otherwise. You have never seen the world if you have not realised that an element of asceticism lies at the foundation of life. You may expel it with the fork of reason or of self-enjoyment, but being part of Nature itself it must ever return. All the art of living lies in a fine mingling of letting go and holding in. The man who makes the one or the other his exclusive aim in life will die before he has ever begun to live. The man who has carried one part of the process to excess before turning to the other will indeed learn what life is, and may leave behind him the memory of a pattern saint. But he alone is the wise master of living who from first to last has held the double ideal in true honour. In these, as in other matters, we cannot know the spiritual facts unless we realise the physical facts of life. All life is a building up and a breaking down, a taking in and giving out, a perpetually anabolic and katabolic rhythm. To live rightly we must imitate both the luxury of Nature and her austerity.

This is the *leitmotif* of the Ellis symphony. Now it appears as a physico-chemical formula; now as a sacred metaphor; again, as a secular translation of that metaphor; yet again as the ethical version of an aesthetic canon. It is, as it were, the river of life, flashing now in the sun-

light, glinting now in the shadows, resting never, yet ever the same beneath the changing hues of its surface.

Ellis, closing his essay, and incidentally, his *Affirmations,* thinks of Rabelais and his famous Abbey of Thelema, where the rule was *Fay ce que vouldras:* Do as thou wilt. "A rule which no pagan or Christian had set up before, because never before except as involved in the abstract conceptions of philosophers, had the thought of voluntary co-operation, of the unsolicited freedom to do well, appeared before European men." Yet Ellis for the moment seems to overlook something very like that sentiment; it came from the pen of another sinner turned saint, eleven centuries before Rabelais. He who was Numidian bishop of Hippo, in Northern Africa, had written "Love and do what you like." Rabelais and St. Augustine! And why not? An American critic, Mr. Albert J. Nock, has even discovered in Rabelais a parallel with Christ. Have we, after all been wandering so far from St. Francis?

II

The Nineteenth Century was written more rapidly and with less preparation than any of Ellis's other books. It was the spring of 1899 and he had just returned from a glorious, sunny winter in Spain with his wife. The public prints were beginning to swell with perfunctory and bombastic valedictories to the "marvellous century" and Ellis, reinvigorated by his recent sojourn, suddenly felt inspired to set down his own impressions of that century. He still recalls vividly how he sat in the little shelter

outside his hut-studio on the hillside in Cornwall, writing away at the book in a glow of satisfaction.

In *The Nineteenth Century*, Ellis seems, at the opening of the twentieth, to be taking counsel with himself. In the dialogue that fills the small book he is both voices. Looking backward, as Bellamy did in a famous book, Ellis is in reality looking forward; or, looking downward from the height of his aspirations to the level of our clumsy reality. The sub-title of the book is *An Utopian Retrospect*, yet the implied Utopia of Ellis is a solid and rational polity. It is, in essence, a Utopia of the higher activities, rather than of economic necessities, the conquest of which it assumes. It is, as from its definition of philosophy it would have to be, undogmatic, if on occasion ironic with overtones of contempt. "Philosophy, if not the science of the sciences, is at all events the art of the sciences, a necessary and inspiring effort of the imagination which can never be out of date, and yet must always be done over again." To which the other speaker adds that "to us" (*i.e.*, the people of the new dispensation) "science *is* an art, and the man of science an artist."

Upon moral force — that nest of virtue which breeds the vice of censorship — he has set down "retrospectively," a sage consideration that is directed, primarily, against force rather than against morality.

> This moral force was a form of militant pugnacity arising in somewhat abnormal persons whose inherited fighting instincts had run into what was, on the surface, a more social channel. Suppose that the morally energetic man saw some of his neighbours doing something he happened to dislike, such as going to particular places of worship or amusement, taking particular

foods or drinks, reading particular books or looking at particular pictures, — instead of simply refraining to follow this example and illustrating the truth of his opinions in the only way in which they could possibly be illustrated, by the beauty and excellence of his own life, he would fight society at large in order to force the other people to do what he thought was good. It seemed perfectly natural to him that whether they had his tastes, or whether they had not, they should act as if they had. Or, again, supposing he thought that something was necessary to be done, it never occurred to him just simply to do it, and so win other people by the quiet beauty of his deed to follow his example, but he would expend vast energy in preaching to other people to do it; the special institutions of the press, the platform, and the pulpit were largely kept up for the convenience of these people. Such people seem usually to have possessed a strain of sympathy which was unduly narrowed and unduly intense with its narrow limits. For instance, when a man had a special sympathy with criminals and a special anxiety to benefit them by improving the condition of prisons, he would be prepared to spend time, health, and money in travelling about the world to further his own views; and yet while thus urging other people to be humane, would himself be most inhumane, brutally ill-treating his wife and driving his son mad. "Moral force" was thus, you see, a very curious thing, at once social and anti-social; it was not exactly insanity, nor criminality; it was just "moral force." Under the conditions of that age it had ample scope for action, and the man of moral force often succeeded in forcing his opinions on a sufficiently large body of his fellows to enable those opinions to become the laws of the land. But naturally such things cannot be forced; if they were good, they commended themselves to the sense of the community, apart from the apostle of moral force; if they were bad, the law, even when passed, became a dead letter. With the decay of the fighting spirit, and the general revulsion against militarism, the men of moral force

became extinct, or were no longer tolerated. It began to be recognised that moral force was just as dangerous and anti-social as physical force, and just as futile. In many ways it was even worse; it was the main cause of the hypocrisy which seems to us so hateful a feature of that time.

The comments upon the anomalous position of woman, of labor, and upon the other moot questions of the day, are made with similar sagacity and simplicity. In Ellis is not a suggestion of that force which he condemns; this, far from weakness, is his greatest strength. Indeed, no small part of the artistry of his life has been his willingness to adhere to the program set forth in the excerpt above: to influence by the beauty and excellence of one's own life rather than by the specious victories of force. Noticeable in the book, too, is Ellis's deep admiration for architecture as the cradle of the other arts. "No better proof exists of the death of art than the inability to make vital buildings." Twenty-three years later he begins the chapter on the Art of Dancing, in *The Dance of Life*, with the statement that "Dancing and building are the two primary and essential arts. The art of dancing stands at the source of all the arts that express themselves in the human person. The art of building, or architecture, is the beginning of all the arts that lie outside the person; and in the end they unite." [1] In Ellis, indeed, all things in the end unite. Architecture has been called frozen music. May we not, in a very literal sense, consider the body as a dance which is itself living architecture? To-

[1] Ellis here quotes, not with disapproval, Edmund Selous's suggestion that the nest, which is the chief early form of building, may first have arisen as "an accidental result of the ecstatic sexual dance of birds."

ward such a view Ellis, in *The Nineteenth Century*, seems clearly inclined, for "the human body is itself the supreme achievement of Nature in overcoming all those difficulties with which the builder is confronted."

It is in this book, too, that occurs the phrase *the supreme art, the art of living*. "Is it not strange that even then, when the race had already existed for many thousand years, the most elementary of all truths, that for living things the art of living must ever be the supreme art, had never been grasped?" If I seem to dwell upon this central phase of Ellis's labors, it is because I feel that in the year 2000, as some other Ellis sets down his Utopian retrospect, he will still have need of repeating those words. Yet this book about our spiritual poverty and our social degradation, about the imitativeness and vacuity of our literature and art, the insanity of our wars and of our heedless self-propagation, is no mere Jeremiad against the times, — no mere "praiser of the future" as against the *laudator temporis acti*. "It is a bad world, maybe, but there could not be a better world. Life has always been perfect. The sum of satisfaction can scarcely be greater in any age than it has been in any other age." A cryptic saying, yet incomplete without its seeming contradiction. "Is it not another way of saying that life can never be perfect?" asks the interlocutor. "Yes," comes the answer, "that was my thought." As the speakers walk out of the book, they hear the soft laughter of young men and maidens among the trees, "as it always has been, as it always will be." Utopia is always here, one seems to hear them whisper.

III

A Study of British Genius brings us back to the Ellis of charts and figures, — the statistician with a soul. Though genius itself may be an incommensurable, mysterious accident, yet it has its commensurable aspects. It was Ellis's purpose to analyze the geographical source and the psychological and anthropological characters of genius; this, combing carefully through the National Dictionary of Biography, he meant to do in a manner that would be scientifically systematic, yet at the same time devoid of an elaborate apparatus that would possess only deceptive value. He appreciates the labors of those who have studied genius as a manifestation of insanity, as he appreciates the investigations of those who, like the pioneer Francis Galton, ignored the psychiatric and even psychological aspects of genius, centering their attention upon the anthropological and statistical sides. "My own attempt to investigate the phenomena of genius," he writes in the new enlarged and revised edition of the book,[1] "may be said to start from the point where Galton's left off (though my standpoint was reached some years before 1892).[2] My method of approaching the group corresponds, so far as the data allow, with that which in France Dr. Toulouse adopted so brilliantly and thoroughly (notably in his study of Zola) in approaching the individual man of genius. From the purely psychiatric standpoint, from the purely anthropological standpoint, it is

[1] London and Boston, 1926.

[2] Ellis here refers to the second edition of Galton's *Hereditary Genius*, 1892, in the second chapter of which Galton admitted the importance of studying genius also as a mental anomaly.

alike impossible to interpret the phenomena of genius adequately."

Ellis does not plan to continue the studies in genius begun with his British monograph. *A Study of British Genius,* then, will remain, from "a single concrete example of the first magnitude, — the genius of Great Britain," — as an illustration of many of the special characteristics of genius in general. Besides being the most impersonal of his books, and the one which involved most labor in the writing, it was the first attempt to study genius in a strictly biological spirit, on an objective foundation. From this standpoint the study forms a marked and illuminating contrast to *The New Spirit* and *Affirmations.* In these books, of course, genius is presented from the personal, literary, artistic point of view. Indeed, because in such books as these Ellis has been able to enter his personal reactions he is the more able to be unusually impersonal in his scientific labors. One of his traits, as we have had full occasion to learn, is a certain impersonalism, — a certain strangely harmonious functioning, as of a natural law. It is this aspect of him that we discover in his study of genius and in his later studies of sex. He classifies, interprets, tabulates his material; often the results corroborate the findings of those who have approached the subject from a different direction. To the task, however, he brings no preconceptions; in a way, the method parallels Ellis's latest contribution to the study of dreams, — an unpretentious and partly statistical method which he calls psycho-synthesis.[1]

With the precise results of Ellis's investigation we are

[1] See page 216.

but indirectly concerned. It is the strictly biological impersonality of the method that interests us. It provides a valuable counterbalance to the lyrical lucubrations which the more flighty student of genius is impelled to indite. Ellis is content to register findings. These, geographically, indicate East Anglia, the South-west and the Welsh border as the three great foci of intellectual ability in England; each of these regions, moreover, differs from the other in the type of genius it produces. Individually, the British genius seems to run true to the general type as we know it, using that word in the broad sense of marked ability rather than in the higher one of unique creativeness.

In *The Soul of Spain* Ellis studies that country as an individualist among the nations, through its representative figures and its representative regions. The materialistic aspects of the subject are set aside — what we might call the "body" of Spain — and the attention focussed upon spiritual values. Ellis, interested in those energies directed "not chiefly towards comfort or towards gain, but towards the more fundamental facts of human existence," recognizes chiefly those qualities with which he himself profoundly sympathizes. As Keyserling, in that remarkable work, *The Travel-Diary of a Philosopher*, travels through the world, so Ellis travels through Spain; so Ellis, more exactly speaking has travelled through life itself.

The illuminating comment in *The Soul of Spain* upon letters, painting, dancing and national psychology has been recognized by the Spaniards themselves. Something in the psychological primitivity of these people seems to have answered to the virginal sight and insight of the

author. (Five times he visited the land, traversing it in every direction. Since the book was published he has made two or three further visits.) One observation in particular stands out for its recognition of a rightful individuality where the superficial observer would discover only an inferiority:

> It is usual to say that every nation passes successively through the three stages of savagery, barbarism, and civilisation, and no doubt that is true. But it has often seemed to me that certain peoples have so natural an affinity for one or other of these stages that something of its character always clings to their national temper. Thus France is not only the land of civilisation to-day, but we clearly detect the same instinct of civilisation in the Gauls described by Strabo two thousand years ago; that premature instinct of civilisation seems indeed the main reason why they fell so easy a prey to the Romans. Again, the Russian is and always has been a barbarian, not necessarily for evil, but also for good. And the Spaniard is, and remains to-day, in the best sense of the word, a savage. His childlike simplicity and intensity of feeling, his hardness and austerity combined with disdain for the superfluous, his love of idleness tempered by the aptitude for violent action, his indifference to persons and interests outside the circle of his own life — these characteristics and the like, which have always marked the Spaniard, mark also the savage.

This becomes almost the touchstone of the Spanish psyche and its peculiar accomplishments in the emotional and intellectual spheres. Of especial interest, in view of Ellis's contributions to sexual psychology, is his chapter on the Spanish woman. The chapters dealing with art introduce an Ellis who is, perhaps, the least known of all. Yet one of his first articles to be printed (apart from one

or two letters to papers) was a short appreciation of Rubens, in a magazine called *The Pen*. This was about 1880; the article was largely the review of a new book. He had just returned from Australia and had been reminded of a visit to the National Gallery prior to his departure for that continent. He had previously disliked Rubens. That day, in the Gallery, the painter stood suddenly revealed to him. This is the Ellis who in 1895 edited Vasari's *Painters* and who, in 1925, astonishes a visiting artist with his intimate knowledge of the history and the technique of painting. Yet Ellis's discussion of Spanish art and of Velasquez in especial is carried on in terms chiefly of spiritual values, with technical questions duly subordinated. Responding to Velasquez, Ellis responds to a reserve and a sobriety that are his own. So, too, considering the Spanish dance, he finds it a revelation of the national spirit. He even discovers new things to say of the perennial *Don Quixote*, which "swept away the romances of chivalry, not because it was a satire of them, but because it was itself a romance of chivalry and the greatest of them all, since its action was placed in the real world." *Don Quixote* becomes the "most cosmopolitan, the most universal of books."

Not Chaucer or Tolstoy shows a wider humanity. Even Shakespeare could not dispense with a villain, but there is no Iago among the six hundred and sixty-nine personages who, it is calculated, are introduced into *Don Quixote*. There is no better test of a genuinely human spirit than an ability to overcome the all-pervading influences of religious and national bias. Cervantes had shed his blood in battle against the infidel corsairs of Algiers, and he had been their chained captive. Yet — although it is

true that he shared all the national prejudices against the Moriscoes in Spain — he not only learned and absorbed much from the Eastern life in which he had been soaked for five years, but he acquired a comprehension and appreciation of the Moor which it was rare indeed for a Spaniard to feel for the hereditary foes of his country. Between Portugal and Spain, again, there was then, to an even greater extent than to-day, a spirit of jealousy and antagonism; yet Cervantes can never say too much in praise of Portugal and the Portuguese. If there was any nation whom Spaniards might be excused for hating at that time it was the English. Those pirates and heretics of the north were perpetually swooping down on their coasts, destroying their galleons, devastating their colonial possessions; Cervantes lived through the days of the Spanish Armada, yet his attitude towards the English is courteous and considerate.

The Soul of Spain, though for Ellis it is an excursion into the specialty of others, is none the less a highly appreciated addition to the library of Iberiana. It is a series of essays rather than a unified volume, yet it has a true unity that lies, not in the nation written about, but in the man writing.

IV

To this period belongs a magazine article which, like that on the color sense in literature, stands out for its experiments in a new field, as a pioneer effort. Coincidentally, it deals likewise with the color sense chiefly. *Mescal: A New Artificial Paradise,* in the *Contemporary Review,* January, 1898, treats of a certain cactus eaten by the Kiowa Indians of New Mexico, — then known as *Anhelonium Lewinii,* or mescal button. Becoming in-

terested in the drug from American accounts of its effects, Ellis performed upon himself the first experiment, outside of America, in an attempt to describe its vision-producing efficacy. The results, which he recorded as the drug was working on him, he has transcribed from these original notes, together with those of an artist friend and two poets — one of them William Butler Yeats — who had been induced to make similar experiments upon themselves. Results vary with the personal constitution. The normal individual acquires an intoxication that Ellis describes as chiefly "a saturnalia of the specific senses, and above all, an orgy of vision." Mescal, thus drunk as a decoction, "reveals an optical fairyland, where all the senses now and again join the play, but the mind itself remains a self-possessed spectator." Consumption in large amounts would, in his opinion, be gravely injurious; yet to persons in good health he recommends the experience as "an unforgettable delight" and "an educational influence of no mean value." [1]

Ellis using himself as a subject for experimentation in drugs is the Ellis of the dissecting room, of the statistical table. Yet even more is he the mystical Ellis intent at the same time upon enlargening the area of experience and upon penetrating to the mysteries at the core of personality. Even here is a union of the biological and the psy-

[1] Ellis warns against confusing this mescal with the intoxicating drink of the same name made from an agave. A later article by him appears in the *Popular Science Monthly*, May, 1902. Also a short one in *The Lancet*, on the physiological effects of the drug. As a result of Ellis's early paper, Dr. Walter Dixon performed many experiments on himself and published an interesting paper in the *Journal of Psychology*, September, 1899.

chological, with the mental life clearly founded upon the bodily organism. He whose great contribution to our contemporary living has been the reintegration of personality is ready to experiment, too, with a species of dissociation.

CHAPTER NINE

Studies in the Psychology of Sex — Dreams

I

THE *Studies in the Psychology of Sex,* which comprise six sturdy volumes, may be considered virtually as an American publication. The first volume, *Sexual Inversion,* published in England, had, as we have seen, been previously issued in Germany, in translation.[1] The sober, scientific reception of the book by the German authorities provides an amusing contrast with the violent hubbub created by the late-Victorian Puritans of Ellis's native land. The United States, from the first, has taken more kindly to Ellis than has England. Even now, it is from these shores that his growing reputation washes back to the rocks of Albion. It was one of the deep pleasures throughout Mrs. Ellis's tour of the United States in 1914 to discover wherever she went a warm admiration, often a reverence, for her husband. "They love you so here," she wrote back to him from the country which had received her, too, with open arms and a warm heart.

The *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* are the central work of an artist of life upon life and its central function.

[1] At present, ten volumes of Ellis, including his sex studies, his *Man And Woman* and *The World of Dreams,* may be had in German. They are published by Curt Kabitzsch, Leipzig.

They synthesize the man. They contain, as they are the product of, Ellis the poet, the physician, the lover as artist, the biologist, the statistician, the pioneer, the social seer and the philosophical anarchist, — the freely functioning individual who is the flower of all social striving, if society is to be anything more than a coffin of conformity.

It is owing to the *Studies* that the name of Ellis carries, to most readers and students, perhaps more than anything else the connotation of sex. Their contribution to the technical aspects of sexology has, of course, been great, and has been recognized among specialists the world over; to minimize this phase of the thirty years' labor would be not only to minimize the importance of increased sexual knowledge but to throw the work itself out of proper proportion. Yet on the other hand to consider the books as a contribution to sexology alone would be another way of destroying proportion. It would be to take the foundation for the entire edifice; much as certain hectic advocates of sexual freedom, in their exaggerated devotion to Aphrodite Pandemos, forget that there is an Aphrodite Urania as well. Foundations presuppose solidity; they sink, not into flowers, but into ugly earth; they are the earth without which heaven could not be. But they are not everything. Though the structures that they support could not else arise, the virtue of the foundation is its strength, not its appearance; indeed, it does not appear.

In the elaboration of his structure, Ellis has avoided alike the extremes of the prurient and the preacher. He has not, as so many would have him do, tried to build without foundations; nor has he made an edifice that is all

foundation. With a courage as rare as the persistency that directed it, he faced every implication of his task and pursued it to the logical conclusion. What, first of all are the facts? How may they be explained? How may the impulses at the bottom of the sexual life be so controlled as to yield to the individual the greatest amount of pleasure and the least amount of harm? How may the function be best guided into its inevitable social channels? These, roughly, are the general questions that Ellis set out to answer, and against which he considered the hundreds of subsidiary questions branching out from them. The spirit in which the work was performed is, in the highest senses of both words, — at those heights, indeed, where they meet, — scientific and artistic. There is no "morality" here; no propaganda for asceticism or license; no "message." Humanity, animate and inanimate nature, becomes the vast laboratory in which this patient and solitary figure conducts his research. The work remains inconclusive; it will, no doubt, remain inconclusive even after the seventh volume of supplementary studies makes its appearance. Ellis has no definite answers to the problems of life; the answers, like that life itself, are in the nature of adjustments to the knowledge at hand rather than, as our religious "leaders" would have it, a wrenching of our dynamic living to the answers set down before ever the questions were asked.

Ellis builds upon facts. Nothing is too insignificant for him to feel a lively curiosity about. Patiently he delves into the writings of others, into the lives of others, in quest of the illuminating detail. Here nothing hinders him. A fact is a fact, and by virtue of its very existence

acquires its place in the potentialities of man and nature. As he approaches without prejudice, so he leaves without censure. Always, at the core of his being, is an appetency for beauty; never, in the narrow sense to which the word has been perverted, a will to morality. Few things human seem alien to his interest. Determined in early youth to make a thorough study of sex, he pursues his plan with almost the impersonality of a natural law; indeed, so doing, he seems to have obeyed a natural law within him: " Without rest, yet without haste," as he himself has said. To no other man has sex revealed more of its poetry, and it may well be that the revelation is intimately bound up with the prose of it that he has uncovered in his *Studies*. What is this wonderful creative urge that runs like the chief leitmotif of the symphony of life through all Nature? What are the variations, and why? What are the dissonances that sound inevitably in the vast music? I use the metaphors of the musical art because the methods of Ellis most resemble music in their aesthetic approach and in the fine blend of science and art, of technique and poetry, which they represent. Regarding his method from another angle, we may say that Ellis cuts away to his facts even as a surgeon with the scalpel; he looks upon his findings with the eyes of the seer. The eyes that have guided the knife behold, too, the vision.

It is deeply significant that despite the unpleasantness which such a profound study reveals, despite the many forms assumed by thwarted sex desire, by organic or psychic inefficiency, maladjustment, impotency, — Ellis hesitates to make even so seemingly clear a distinction as that between normal and abnormal. Inevitably, one's

views of the matter are colored by the miseducation one has received in the name of a "good, moral bringing up." Almost willy-nilly, we have thus been made, not into humane spectators, but into cruel judges. The satisfaction of the crude impulses that lie at the bottom of our judgments we have transformed into a feeling of righteousness. In Ellis, no such righteousness; no such reptiles of the mind; no such judiciary satisfaction. Building upon what actually *is*, he speculates upon the best things that might be; what in other persons would become a superior moral judgment, in him becomes, at its harshest, a sort of philosophical disgust with a human race that insists upon getting in the way of its own happiness.

Even where there is reasonable certainty as to the scientific facts, Ellis early learned that their artistic application is an intensely personal matter. Hence his statement that there are no realisms; there are only various idealisms.

The *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* comprise, thus far, six volumes. As they appear in the definitive American edition, they are, with the dates of original publication in the United States, as follows: [1]

I. *The Evolution of Modesty. The Phenomena of Sexual Periodicity. Auto-erotism.* 1900. Third edition, 1910.

II. *Sexual Inversion.* 1901. Second American edition, 1915.

[1] The sole authorized publishers of this work in English are F. A. Davis Company, Philadelphia. Sales are restricted to members of the medical and legal professions.

III. *Analysis of the Sexual Impulse.* 1903. Second edition, 1913.

IV. *Sexual Selection in Man.* 1905.

V. *Erotic Symbolism. The Mechanism of Detumescence. The Psychic State in Pregnancy.* 1906.

VI. *Sex in Relation to Society.* 1910.

From the outset these studies have been accepted by the medical world as contributions of outstanding importance to the technical aspects of sex and of sexual investigation. This has been true especially of Germany, which has long been the chief center of sexual studies and which has given us more than one standard work upon the subject. Thus, while such authorities as Moll, Näcke, Iwan Bloch, Hirschfeld, Freud and others might be at variance with each other, they were alike generous in according to Ellis's labor recognition for its value to their sexual specialties. In America, one of the earliest friends won by the Englishman was Dr. J. G. Kiernan of Chicago, who, up to the time of his death about two years ago, remained a staunch friend and an able advocate.

Two of the most prominent terms in current psychoanalysis derive from the sexual studies of Ellis. They are *Auto-erotism* and *Narcissism.* With reference to each there are qualifications to be made. Thus, Fritz Wittels, in his book on Freud,[1] asserts that "The word narcissism was coined by Havelock Ellis," and in this follows Freud,

[1] See *Sigmund Freud, His Personality, His Teachings, & His School.* English translation by Eden and Cedar Paul. 1924. Page 200.

who in his *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexual-theorie* declares that "The term narcissism was not coined by Näcke but by Havelock Ellis."[1] Ellis himself has corrected these statements.[2]

By auto-erotism Ellis, from the first, has meant to indicate a far wider area than that of conscious self-indulgence and self-pollution. To him the term has signified "the phenomena of spontaneous sexual emotion generated in the absence of an external stimulus proceeding, directly or indirectly, from another person. In a wide sense, which cannot be wholly ignored here, auto-erotism may be said to include those transformations of repressed sexual activity which are a factor of some morbid conditions as well as of the normal manifestation of art and poetry, and indeed, more or less color the whole of life."[3]

At the very beginning of his studies in auto-erotism, then, we find Ellis hinting at what has come to be called, in psychoanalytic language, sublimation. It is precisely on this note that the chapters on auto-erotism come to an

[1] Fifth edition, page 81.

[2] In a letter to the translators of Wittels's book (March 16, 1924) quoted in their translation, he has explained that he described the condition as a variety of auto-erotism, speaking as he did to the name of Narcissus. He was in close touch with Näcke, who saw the article in *The Alienist and Neurologist* and forthwith added the ending *ismus* to the Greek name. The accepted name of the perversion is thus a joint contribution to psychological terminology. In a later letter to me (October 3, 1925), Ellis considers his use of the name Narcissus as a suggestion to Näcke, who completed the process. For the rest, see in precisely the explanation he early gave in the volume of the *Studies* containing the chapters on Auto-Erotism (See Volume I of the *Studies* as published in the United States; page 207).

[3] For Ellis's objections to the meaning that auto-erotism has assumed among the less careful of the Freudians, see in *The Philosophy of Conflict*, page 201 (*Psycho-Analysis in Relation to Sex*).

end. Sex, which to Ellis is the central fact of life, is not necessarily the rest of the circle.

> The sexual impulse is not, as some have imagined, the sole root of the most massive human emotions, the most brilliant human aptitudes, — of sympathy, of art, of religion. In the complex human organism, where all the parts are as many-fibred and so closely interwoven, no great manifestation can be reduced to one single source. But it largely enters into and molds all of these emotions and aptitudes, and that by virtue of its two most peculiar characteristics: it is, in the first place, the deepest and most volcanic of human impulses, and, in the second place, — unlike the only other human impulse with which it can be compared, the nutritive impulse, it can, to a large extent, be transformed into a new force capable of the strangest and most various uses. So that in the presence of all these manifestations we may assert that in a real sense, though subtly intermingled with very diverse elements, auto-erotism everywhere plays its part.

Freud, as we have seen, has been very hospitable to the pioneer efforts of Ellis; in his famous book upon *The Interpretation of Dreams* he again paid tribute to the Englishman. " The free indulgence of the psychic in the play of its faculties finds expression with us in the non-interference with the dream on the part of the foreconscious activity. The ' return to the embryonal state of psychic life in the dream ' and the observation of Havelock Ellis, ' an archaic world of vast emotions and imperfect thoughts ' appear to us as happy anticipations of our deductions to the effect that *primitive* modes of work suppressed during the day participate in the formation of the dream. . . .[1]

[1] See Brill's translation into English, page 467.

II

Throughout these six volumes the phenomena of the sexual life pass before Ellis's eyes as so many bacteria upon the slide beneath the gaze of the investigator's microscope in the laboratory. The volumes teem with personal histories, with cases. No idiosyncrasy is too unimportant for recording; no seeming enormity is too gross for consideration and for impassive study. No pedant could ask more in the nature of specific data. Yet everywhere one feels the presence of what Ellis, in his original preface, called not too fortunately a "moral fervour." As the work advances, one gains the conviction that all this has been set down, not in the interests of science only, but of art. It is not accident that the chapters progress away from perversions and aberrations toward an art of loving, toward the ultimate relation of the individual sex life to the life of society. It is a Bernard Shaw, beginning his intellectual career as an economic materialist, who may approach its end with a Dantesque abhorrence of the flesh, as mirrored in the closing scenes of *Back to Methusaleh*. It is an Ellis who, beginning his life's labors as a man of the spirit, may achieve a radiant carnality. Shaw, the early Fabian, has long been the Puritan; Ellis, the early fellow of the New Life, has, without trumpeting slogans, been in effect the enlightened Pagan. "I regard sex as the central problem of life," wrote Ellis in his General Preface to the *Studies*, dated July, 1897. "And now that the problem of religion has practically been settled" (he speaks, of course, with enlightened persons in mind), "and that the problem of labor has at

least been placed on a practical foundation, the question of sex — with the racial questions that rest on it — stands before the coming generations as the chief problem for solution. Sex lies at the root of life, and we can never learn to reverence life until we know how to understand sex."

In these *Studies* indeed, Ellis virtually completes yet another circle of which sex is the center. The spiritual and the material, the flesh and the spirit, the body and the mind, appear again not as separable entities, but as twin aspects of an essential unity. I cannot imagine the man countenancing any solution of the sexual problem that assumes for all alike an undeviating course. Love, like religion, is a purely private matter. Society does not enter into the question until the appearance of a child, whereupon the issue — in part, at least, — shifts from a personal to an economic basis. Even here, however, there is ample room for difference with established opinion. Birth may be controlled. "Illegitimate" children may be legitimized. Unions may exist as experiments. Such sanctions as those deriving from imaginary divinities I assume as having long been done away with by intelligent persons. "The problem of religion has practically been settled."

It is one of Ellis's conclusions that the future type of marriage tends toward an elastic, yet not a lax, monogamy.

> Monogamy, in the fundamental biological sense, represents the natural order into which the majority of sexual facts will always naturally fall because it is the relationship which most adequately corresponds to all the physical and spiritual facts involved. But

if we realize that sexual relationships primarily concern only the persons who enter into those relationships, and if we further realize that the interest of society in such relationships is confined to the children which they produce, we shall also realize that to fix by law the number of women with whom a man shall have sexual relationships, and the number of men with whom a woman shall unite herself, is more unreasonable than it would be to fix by law the number of children they shall produce. The State has a right to declare whether it needs few citizens or many; but in attempting to regulate the sexual relationships of its members the State attempts an impossible task and is at the same time guilty of an impertinence.

From the moment that the necessity of divine sanction disappears from unions between the sexes, an immense stride has been made toward a scientific morality. The control that man is gradually gaining over his procreative powers, though not yet perfect as regards the individual, is surely effective as regards the race, and represents another stride in the same direction. There cannot be the slightest doubt that so-called irregular sexual unions will increase markedly with the more widespread knowledge of contraception. Yet objections to the dissemination of this knowledge are basically religious in a narrow sense, — a relic of divine sanction, and as such to be ignored. There are scientific objections, too; these, however, belong in a different category and demand study. Yet another factor must contribute to a freer sexual morality. (How can any valid morality be other than free?) This is the spreading of a better knowledge of sexual prophylaxis, which has been criminally opposed by mistaken zealots. Regarding the curse of syphilis and cognate diseases

as a proper punishment of transgression — and overlooking, in their zeal, the countless possibilities of innocent suffering through infection — they persist in a course that is again, in a narrow sense, basically religious.

We conceive, then, a fairly immediate future in which sexual disease is, like birth itself, under control. Casual unions are not overshadowed by the cloud of venereal disease or of undesired offspring. A new sexual freedom, under the circumstances, is inevitable. Inevitable? It has long been here. Our present business is simply to register the facts. Such a freedom, by orthodox definition, is "immoral." But the dictionary defines and registers, it does not create, usage. So must it, too, in this case take cognizance of a subtle change. Much of the world today is "immoral" by definition only.

Ellis, distinguishing between the personal and the social aspects of marriage, finds it necessary to hold the two aspects apart, lest injustice be done to the individual and society. In so far as "marriage approaches its ideal state," however, "those two aspects become one."

Involved with these questions, of course, is the problem of prostitution. The moral zealot, treating it with his blundering iron fist, has made a mess of the matter, as of everything else he lays his clumsy hands upon. Here is a case for economists and sociologists as well as for sexologists; moralizing is of no efficacy at all. Were society honest, it would recognize the institution, — perhaps, as Hinton has somewhere suggested, treat the women in it with a certain professional esteem, until we had as a social group been educated beyond it. Certainly our present

attitude involves a corroding hypocrisy. As Ellis has remarked, in another connection, "The ostrich, it was once imagined, hides its head in the sand and attempts to annihilate facts by refusing to look at them; but there is only one known animal which adopts this course of action, and it is called Man."

If there is a sense in which love rises far higher than lust, there is yet another in which both are one. Lust is simply the materiality of which love is the spirituality. That most persons can not advance beyond the first step should be no stranger than that in the other provinces of living they remain at the lower stages. Lust, the raw material of love, may exist without love. Love without lust, however, is a bloodless allegory. So, too, is it true that in every marriage, the greater happiness of union contains an element of what coarser natures seek, half-unconsciously, in prostitution. I reject the apology implied in likening this element to the baser metal that goes to the making of an alloy. There is a moment in which salaciousness and the love-ecstasy become one.

It is not my ambitious intention to compress into a few pages the essence of the thousands of pages that comprise the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*. These are not to be paraphrased; they should be read, and not only by the professional classes to whom, at present, their sale is legally restricted. I wish to emphasize, as the one great result that rises from these numerous chapters, Ellis's conception of love as an individual art, — an art which, like the rest of living, as he phrased it in his very first book, must be learned by all, yet which none can really teach, — an art which, then, we must teach ourselves,

using as the basis of such instruction a full and unprejudiced knowledge of the facts.

There is a sense in which these *Studies* form a milestone upon the road of woman's true emancipation, and not from any minor aspect of the ballot. The great women of his time have from the first recognized Ellis's value as a coadjutor in their especial problems. He has become such a coadjutor not through any special program directed toward the child-bearing sex, but by force of having approached mankind as a whole. The economic problem of woman he has related to her social and sexual position, and he has shown how these elements are related to her biology and psychology. Before the *Studies,* in *Man And Woman;* after the *Studies,* especially in *The Task of Social Hygiene,* he adverts to the peculiar problems of womankind.

The new morality adumbrated by such a monumental encyclopaedia of sexual experience and speculation would be a misnomer if into the word " morality " one were to read any connotation of dogma. Perversions, even the most revolting of them, are but a symbol of that function to which the victim has not succeeded in effecting a more or less normal adjustment. Many of them are found in nature, among the animals. Even at worst, they are subjects for clinical study, not for condescending comment. There is, perhaps, a normal ideal; surely, after reading through the case histories that Ellis has assembled from all over the world, it is not easy to speak of normality. So, too, prostitution is the evidence of society's failure to achieve adjustment. Are there, here, any definite forms? Is there not, rather, a series of changing ad-

justments? Is it not, then, a sign of vitality that any age should be "immoral," by which word, to the scientific student, is evidenced a peculiarly active period of transition?

I would not father these notions upon Ellis, though I find in his labors the facts upon which they are based. There is nothing conventional about the man; but from this to connect him with every varying aspect of sexual unconventionality is to violate his own right to be as he chooses to be. It is enough that, having attained to his own lofty conception of sexual union, and having lived his conception in his own free and unostentatious way, he provides us with the materials for our own freedom.

Toward the end of the tenth chapter of Volume VI, considering the question of Marriage, Ellis had expressed the opinion that we may reasonably expect "in the future a slow though steady increase in the recognition, and even the extension, of those variations of the monogamic order which have, in reality, never ceased to exist." In other words, I take it, society will come to sanction what always it has condoned. His own latest statements upon the question, as it affects both society and the individual, present a suggestion of two acceptable forms of sexual union based upon individual and social needs. (*Forum*, December, 1925).

On the one hand the decrease of prostitution, — if that is really what we are witnessing, — and on the other hand the new requirement of control and deliberation in the production of offspring in marriage demand a correspondingly new form of recognized sexual union. Here again we find America taking a pioneering part. Unions for sexual and social companionship,

not for pro-creation of children, are, we know, very frequent. But to know, and at the same time pretend not to know, cannot be considered a worthy and dignified social outlook. To face the new social forms and to recognize them, thus giving them their due weight of responsibility, is the only path of progress. Therefore we cannot but acclaim the honorable part played by the American *Journal of Social Hygiene* in recent years by repeatedly putting forward the need for recognizing the place in modern life of the form of marriage called the "companionate." As distinct from "family marriage," formed with the deliberate intention of producing offspring and therefore demanding very careful supervision by the state, — since society is intimately concerned with the quality of the new members entering its ranks, — the companionate would exist for the sake of those couples who are not yet able to undertake the care of a family, and of those who, by reason of defective constitutional health or other cause, will never be justified in producing a family. Such a relationship mainly concerns the two individuals concerned; the special training and the special qualifications which, as we are now at last beginning to realize, are required in those who propose to become parents, may in these couples be dispensed with. The companion marriage may be formed, and may be ended, with far less preparation and far less formality than, as we now view the matter, can ever be desirable when a family marriage is proposed. The open recognition of a companionate form of marriage, with or without a license from the state seems thus to be one of the chief steps before us in wholesome social reformation.

Stated in the simplest language, then, the direct supervising rôle played by society in sexual union is restricted to those unions that produce children. Social morality becomes a matter of economic and hygienic regu-

lation. So, too, does individual morality, plus the element of personal taste and freedom. Prostitution, beyond the social and individual dangers that it contains, is degrading precisely because it is a form of barter in just those provinces where individual taste and freedom should rule. So, too, to repeat a platitude, are many marriages, which differ from prostitution only venically, not spiritually. On the other hand, if men and women choose to exchange their favors, it is no one's concern but their own. All that we have a right to ask of them — and it is for their own good as well as ours — is that, in straightforward, hygienic speech, they keep clean and spread no pest. If they are careless, it is our right in self-protection to interfere. If they are careful, no dogma of morality, no mental disease of conformity, excuses our intrusion. I am well aware that into this problem, which will acquire importance with the coming years, enters the factor of jealousy. Jealousy, however, is one of those manifestations of the acquisitive instincts which it were better to eradicate or at least control. It connotes a more subtle form of bodily slavery, of which we have not yet learned to be ashamed.

It is the great virtue of Ellis's *Studies* that at the same time they are grounded in science and in aesthetics; that, in other words, divine sanction and its accompanying tablets are replaced by human reason and the sanction of personal taste. What Socrates is supposed to have done for philosophy, Ellis has done — though not alone — for sex: taken it down from the clouds and restored it to the healing touch of Mother Earth. In this Pandora's box, where so many others have found only stench and

miasma, he has found a beauty to answer that which he brought. Among the great students of sexology he stands almost alone for this rare combination of scientific precision and aesthetic penetration.

III

I have already mentioned Freud's acknowledgments to Ellis. The Englishman's *World of Dreams*, though not published as a book until 1911, had been foreshadowed in the form of articles that appeared as early as 1895, 1896 and 1899. Ellis's work, though belonging to the introspective type of dream book in which division Freud's epoch-making volume also takes its place, is built upon purely personal lines; it does not, moreover, accept without qualification the findings of the great Viennese Jew. Indeed, Ellis's interest has been centered upon the normal dream, which he regards as one of the clues to that greater dream called life. For, " In dreams planes of existence that in waking life are fundamentally distinct are brought together, so that events belonging to different planes move on the same plane, and even become combined. Acting and life, the picture and the reality, are no longer absolutely distinct. Art and life flow in the same channel." So, too, in the dream he finds " a delightful illustration of the fact that reasoning, in its rough form, is only the crudest and most elementary form of intellectual operation, and that the finer forms of thinking involve much more than logic. ' All the thinking in the world,' as Goethe puts it, ' will not lead us to thought.' "

With this same passage in mind, I have paraphrased

the Goethean phrase to read that neither will all the feeling in the world lead us to art.[1] For Ellis, no rigid line of demarcation between emotion and intellect, between feeling and thinking; rather a strange blending that is at the same time a unison and a harmony. If life to him may be a pure spectacle, at times removed from all its personal implications, it is because he is one of our few contemporaries who appreciates the logic of absurdity. It is the author of this dream book who has written, in the Third Series of *Impressions and Comments*, that "The world is essentially absurd. We usually fail to see it for the good reason that we fail to see the world at all. We rarely have that Intuition of the Absurd, that power of seeing the world whole and apart from our personal ends which Bergson has in his mellifluous way explained Intuition to be. But it is a part of its Absurdity that there should be a little thread of Reason running through the world, and in so far as we discern that thread, and hold by it, we have attained the Intuition of the Absurd, we have seen the world with the eyes of God, we have lifted ourselves above the Herd in the Slime."[2] By this simple token Ellis, in whom some have thought to detect a deficiency in the sense of humor, reveals himself the countryman, after all, of a Thomas Hood, a Lewis Carroll, a William Schwenck Gilbert.

[1] See *The Man Mencken.* Page 268.

[2] Page 34. Perhaps I may be pardoned for introducing at this point an interesting book that otherwise might pass unknown to the reader. I refer to *A Esthetica da Vida* (The Aesthetics of Life), by the Brazilian, Graça Aranha, author of the widely-commented novel *Chanaan.* Aranha, through pages that suggest now Freud and now the Oriental philosophers, builds up a philosophy of impersonal union with the universe. His play, *Malazarte,* attempts to dramatize the underlying conceptions of this view.

Homer has sung that sleep is the brother of Death; Vaschide, correcting the poet, has made of sleep the brother of life; Ellis, quoting Vaschide, adds that it is Life's elder brother. "In our dreams the fetters of civilisation are loosened, and we know the fearful joy of freedom." . . . "Dreams," adds Ellis toward the close of his book, "are true while they last. Can we, at best, say more of life?" In that question quiver both the fear and the joy of freedom.

From *The World of Dreams*, which is not so much a treatise as a personal record upon which is built a series of observations and speculations, it appears that Ellis regards the Freudian interpretations as being often sound, though with a marked tendency to the far-fetched assumptions of most pioneer geniuses. To Ellis the wish-type of dreaming is undoubtedly a type, but only one of many. Closely related to such a type, yet quite distinct from it, he considers the contrast-dream, in which we may dream things quite alien to our real desires. The Freudian explanation of such dreams is familiar to the student. Ellis's explanation is that they are vestigial impulses within us that might, under altered circumstances, have inclined us in a different direction entirely. All things thus would seem possible to the personality. Perhaps a wish is but a chemical majority? At any rate, here Ellis does not see evidences of released repression, but relics of a choice that once was more possible than now. So, too, indicating that the same dream may proceed from diverse causes, Ellis instances the dream of eating; this may derive from genuine hunger, in which it is an emotional dream, representing wish-fulfillment of the Freudian

type, or it may derive from actually being too full of food, in which case it is an intellectual dream picturing a theory to account for the sensation of fulness.

Thus, too, we learn that in a series of dreams that occupied him for four consecutive nights he dreamed, on the third night, that he was " meditating the step of going on the stage as a comedian — the only rôle of the three which seemed to cause me any nervousness or misgiving. In contrast-dreams of this type we are not concerned with the eruption of concealed and repressed wishes. They are merely based on vestigial possibilities, entirely alien to our temperament as it has developed in life, and only a part of our complex personalities in the sense that, as Schopenhauer has said, whatever path we take in life there are latent germs within us which could only have developed in an exactly opposite direction."

The significance of the dream book to Ellis's life lies in the parallel that it draws between the two worlds of waking and sleeping, — in the blending of two provinces commonly held to be sharply divided. Without establishing a poetic identity between the two states, I may summarize the case somewhat in this manner: Far more than we imagine, we reason while we dream; far more than we imagine, we dream while we reason.[1]

[1] From my own experience I am able, at one point, to take direct issue with Ellis when he states (page 65) that " I have never detected in my dreams any recognition that they are dreams. I may say, indeed, that I do not consider that such a thing is really possible, though it has been borne witness to by many philosophers and others from Aristotle and Synesius and Gassendi onwards." Ellis considers that the dreamer, under these conditions, has for a moment unwittingly " emerged at the waking surface of consciousness." This may be. As a child — my recollection is very vivid, as the dreams were very frequent and themselves vivid — I

Ellis's latest contribution to the study of dreams [1] seeks, characteristically, in a very modest way, to complete yet another circle. In distinction from what Freud calls dream-analysis the Englishman suggests a complementary method of dream-synthesis; in a word, psycho-analysis is rounded out with what Ellis calls psycho-synthesis. Dream-synthesis, though older than analysis in human history, has never been pursued in a scientific spirit, and it is toward this end that Ellis introduces the subject. Likening analysis to geological investigation, he compares the synthesis of dreams to geography. The one cuts below the surface and examines strata; the other travels over the surface and perfects the map of the territory. Ellis, of course, does not question the value of dream-analysis; he considers, however, that when followed too narrowly it leads to pitfalls that may be avoided by the complementary knowledge to be gained from dream-synthesis. Essentially, the suggestion is the application of a statistical method to dreams, leading to the classification of types. As an introductory experiment Ellis studies a series of one hundred dreams, grouping them at the close into vesical dreams, dreams of eating, dreams of

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was excessively fond of sweets. Alas, I still am. Many and many a night I spent in the visionary purloining of chocolate bon bons. The taste of the sweets, for which perhaps there were somatic reasons, was always marked. At times I would take to flight on being discovered. Very frequently, however, I would treat myself to Gargantuan thefts of the candies, in the foreknowledge that, since this was only a dream I should not be punished. Somewhat less frequently, yet often enough, I would test the dream by my impunity. If I was not seized by the proprietor of the shop while I helped myself to his property, then I was certain that it was a dream!

[1] See *The Psychoanalytic Review*, issues for July, 1925, October, 1925 and January, 1926. *The Synthesis of Dreams*, by Havelock Ellis.

clothing, of traveling and so on, and noting the ratio of occurrence. The method suggests interesting possibilities; like that of *A Study in British Genius*, too, it suggests a corrective to the more imaginative and lyrical type of investigation. If Freud's analysis reveals the artist in his temperament, Ellis's suggested synthesis reveals the scientist in one who has ever maintained a living equilibrium.

With relation to psycho-analysis the most important statement of Ellis appears in *The Philosophy of Conflict*, in his essay on *Psycho-Analysis in Relation to Sex*. Though Ellis was not absolutely the first in England to call attention to Freud, his very first volume of the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* was the first book to contain a full exposition in English of the views set forth in the studies in hysteria by Breuer and Freud.[1] Ellis was, indeed, prepared for the reaction of these writers against the prudery of Charcot. A year before the appearance of their book he had, in *Man And Woman*, himself expressed the opinion that "the part played by the sexual emotions in hysteria was underestimated." From this time, as Ellis has recorded, there began between him and Freud an "exchange of publications and occasionally letters." Freud found in the Englishman's *Studies* more than one helpful suggestion in the development of his doctrines, "suggestions which I had not myself been inclined to carry to an extreme or dogmatic form." In this way Freud, by the histories of normal persons in the

[1] There had been a review of the *Studien über Hysterie* in *Brain*; this it was that induced Ellis to purchase the book.

third volume of the *Studies,* was encouraged to " follow up the task he had already begun of pushing back the sexual origins of neuroses to an ever earlier age, and especially to extend this early origin so as to cover not only neurotic but ordinary individuals, an extension of pivotal importance, for it led to the Freudian doctrine becoming, instead of a mere clue to psycho-pathology, an alleged principle of universal psychological validity."

To Ellis, Freud is an artist who arose in science. The Viennese investigator early disclaimed such a title. " *Nicht Poet sondern Naturforchser,*" he has said of himself in the preface to his famous book on dreams. And lately, in a private letter to the Englishman, he has disclaimed the name of artist. Yet it is true, as Ellis has written, that to a large extent Freud remains within the artistic sphere, " with disconcerting results alike to himself and his followers when he, or they, attempt to treat his work as a body of objectively demonstrable scientific propositions." Freud's great discovery, in Ellis's words, is that " Spirit is as indestructible as matter. . . . Freud's work is the revelation in the spiritual world of that transformation and conservation of energy which half a century earlier had been demonstrated in the physical world." Could one without the make-up of the artist have written *Beyond the Pleasure Principle?* For the rest, when Ellis calls a man an artist he does not mean thereby to separate him from the scientists, but to connote a blending of art and science in which the result is a product superior to either in its largely imaginary isolation. It matters little to Ellis how much of the present Freudian structure will remain standing. For Freud " enlarged the human ho-

rizon, he discovered new fields for fruitful research and new methods for investigating them. That was something bigger than either a sound theory or a precise collection of facts, for we do not demand of a Columbus that he shall be a reliable surveyor of the new world he discovers. . . . The human soul will never again be to human eyes what it was before Freud explored it. He has revealed the possibility of new depths, new subtleties, new psychic mechanisms. That is the great and outstanding fact."

As to the ulterior significance of psychoanalysis, Ellis in his later work has beheld in it a " hand that is pointed towards an approaching new horizon of the human spirit. I am careful not to say that I see the new horizon itself. That only exists in my own mind, for these books " (*i.e.*, the various volumes on psychoanalysis that have prompted his remarks) " are too pedestrian, too prosaic, too (as they used to say before ' matter ' was recognized as a poetic fiction) materialistic, for so large a gesture. Yet they really point the way towards the direction in which poets and prophets will raise the curtain that covers the new horizon. They are doing more, they are actually laying the foundations of the structure on which the poets and prophets will stand. They are even themselves revealing on one aspect of the human soul. For they are like the Hans Andersen child who saw that the Emperor had no clothes on. They have demonstrated the fact that Man, who fancied he had dressed himself in such fantastic disguising garments, has no clothes on, but remains a mass of primitively fundamental, even unconscious, human impulses, woven in and out of each other, as equals, no

longer divided into some that may be shown, being respectable, and others that must be concealed, suppressed, or aspersed with contempt, as though they had no right to existence. So the way is opened for a new vision of the soul, a new vision of the world, a new vision even of the human body, what would once have been called a new Gospel of Life. That is still some way ahead. The psychoanalysts are not themselves the people who can bring it. But glimpses were caught of it — as by Whitman — before they even existed." [1]

IV

If the world is a dream, an absurdity shot through with a thread of reason, around which may crystallize such significance as our own personalities lend to the deposit, the thread of Ellis's reason is a stout fiber, a veritable Ariadne's clew in this labyrinth of our living. *The Task of Social Hygiene,* following within a year upon *The World of Dreams,* reveals a tight grip upon reality that might not have been suspected by the casual reader of the earlier book. Ellis is constantly surprising one with this sound practicality. His *Utopias* rise from firm foundations. His conception of social hygiene includes, as his very first book foreshadowed, all those things that may better be accomplished by social effort to the end that a finer type of individual may be bred. Beneath and above these statistics, these technical divagations through economics, industrial theory and practice, the woman question, education, the new love, birth rates, eugenics, religion, law, war, internationalism, dwells the primary aim of Ellis

[1] *Impressions And Comments.* Third Series. Pages 141–2.

to "bring a new joy and a new freedom into life." Such a hygiene is not only a sanitation of one's surroundings, but of one's self. The fruit of that higher individual development which is to be facilitated through a better social organization comes as a "large spirit of human fellowship."

This, then, is unapologetic social reform, with an important reservation. Ellis is not deceived by the mirage of "progress." The conception, to be sure, is a useful one "in so far as it binds together those who are working for common ends, and stimulates that perpetual slight movement in which life consists. But there is no general progress in Nature, nor any unqualified progress; that is to say, that there is no progress for all groups along the line, and that even those groups which progress pay the price of their progress."

Yet Ellis proceeds as if there were advancement. The decay of chivalry, which he calls an "unhealthy ideal," spells really a step forward for womankind. If the intimate association of the sexes destroys an ideal "according to which a woman was treated as a cross between an angel and an idiot — that is matter for rejoicing. Wherever men and women stand in each other's presence the sexual instinct will always ensure an adequate ideal halo." Other unhealthy ideals decay. Quantity production of children gives way to quality production, despite the cries of the churches. Woman discovers a new freedom, in which a higher love life and sounder conceptions of puericulture and of domestic relations are inevitably involved. Morality veers from the path of ignorant force in the service of compulsory conformity to that of edu-

cated example and the recognition that diversity need not spell perversity. War is seen for the insanity that it is; peace appears as a field where plenty of opportunity arises for the display of real courage and those virtues which militarists fear may die out in the race unless periodically we slay men to preserve them. An international language (an auxiliary, not a substitute) at once helps and symbolizes a closer communion of the nations.

Ellis's final chapter on Individualism and Socialism really crystallizes the purport of the volume, — for that matter, of every book that he has written. Notice first that the two supposedly antagonistic words are connected with an *and* and not divided by a *versus*. For to Ellis these are not political parties which separate inherently predestined enemies; they are obverse and reverse of the same coin, or, better still, two notes of the same consonance. They represent, not a controversy, but a harmony; more: one cannot truly exist without the other, and they condition each other reciprocally. "So far as I can see, they are both absolutely right. Nor is it even clear that they are really opposed; for, as happens in every field, while the affirmations of each are sound, their denials are unsound. Certainly along each line we may be carried to absurdity. The Individualism of Max Stirner is not far from the ultimate frontier of sanity, and possibly on even the other side of it; while the Socialism of the Oneida Community involved a self-subordination which it would be idle to expect from the majority of men and women. But there is a perfect division of labour between Socialism and Individualism. We cannot have too much of either of them. We have only to remember that the field of

each is distinct. No one needs individualism in his water supply, and no one needs Socialism in his religion. All human affairs sort themselves out as coming within the province of Socialism or of Individualism, and each may be pushed to its furthest extreme."

The society of the future, as he has written in his chapter on The Changing Status of Women, "is a reasonable anarchy founded on a broad basis of Collectivism." In it, law is made for man, not man for the law; in it, society is the ultimate loser if it oppress its oppugnant, adventurous spirits whose inner urge is to forecast, in their intensely individual present, the social future. "Every great and vitally organized person is hostile to the rigid and narrow routine of social conventions, whether established by law or by opinion; they must ever be broken to suit his vital needs. Therefore the more we multiply these social routines, the more strands we weave into the social web, the more closely we draw them, by so much the more we are discouraging the production of great and vitally organized persons, and by so much the more we are exposing society to destruction at the hands of such persons."

The Task of Social Hygiene, which does not seem to be so well known as it should be, is really, as are in another sense the *Studies*, a prose corollary of the later, poetic *Dance of Life*. The one deals with the techniques of life as the other with its arts; the one was written primarily by Ellis the Socialist and the other by Ellis the Individualist; the one represents Collectivism at its soundest, the other beautifully exemplifies Ellis's "reasonable anarchy."

CHAPTER TEN

The Years of the War — Impressions and Comments — The Dance of Life — Sex and Youth

I

THE years of the Great War weighed heavily upon Ellis. No sooner had the international insanity burst forth than he lost his aged father. When it had reached its middle point in 1916 his wife succumbed at last to the rigors of a long-standing case of diabetes, aggravated by the strenuous demands of her tour in the United States. To add to the grief of these personal losses, here was the whole world of so much potential beauty crashing about his ears in a symphony of madness. Yet over these personal sorrows, as above the shrieking theologies and national partisanries of the day, Ellis rose sadly triumphant. The *Impressions And Comments*, though formally dated just before the war and brought to completion in 1923, were really begun, as we have seen, in the distant Australian days. In themselves they form a spiritual diary, — perhaps rather an ideary, — couched in intensely personal terms, in a language that flutters at times between poetry and prose, suggesting at the best moments a very music of thought and feeling.

Indeed, if one looks for the more intimate aspects of Ellis, expressed in language that attains a maximum of power with a seeming minimum of effort, — that is rich without being lavish, that is a perfect medium for the inner life it portrays, — one should go to the *Impressions And Comments*. These are not books to study, date by date, in chronological order. They may be opened anywhere. Their least quality is a rare intellectual honesty, which is but the beginning of wisdom. Though time and again Ellis returns to questions that have occupied him since loneliness and Nature taught him meditation, always he adds a novelty that transforms the material. He has the Midas-touch that makes not gold but beauty. As time goes on, he sees the world less and less as an accretion of facts, as a laboratory of Truth, as an arena of the intellect; it becomes a harmony of emotions, a universal Beauty. This is that Beauty which, as he has told us in his third series of *Impressions And Comments*, is in outer vesture Truth and at its innermost core, Love. Involved in this subtle change is not a shifting of position so much as a modification of emphasis.

To see the World as Beauty is the whole End of Living. I cannot say it is the aim of living. Because the greatest ends are never the result of aiming; they are infinite and our aims can only be finite. . . . Beauty is the end of living, not Truth. When I was a youth, by painful struggle, by deliberate courage, by intellectual effort, I won my way to what seemed to be Truth. It was not the end of living. It brought me no joy. Rather it brought despair; the universe seemed ugly and empty. . . .

One day, by no conscious effort of my own, by some inspiration from without, by some expiration from within, I saw that

empty and ugly Universe as Beauty, and was joined to it in an embrace of the spirit. The joy of that Beauty has been with me ever since and will remain with me till I die. All my life has been the successive quiet realisations in the small things of the world of that primary realisation in the greatest thing of the world. I know that no striving can help us to attain it, but, in so far as we attain, the end of living is reached and the cup of joy runs over.

So, too, speaking of "fact":

The only hard facts, one learns to see as one gets older, are the facts of feeling. Emotion and sentiment are, after all, incomparably more solid than statistics. So that when one wanders back in memory through the field of life one has traversed, as I have, in diligent search of hard facts, one comes back bearing in one's arms a Sheaf of Feelings. They after all are the only facts hard enough to endure as long as life endures.

Where, I wonder, outside of a short poem by Thomas Hardy, have more sensible words been written about the war, than those Ellis has entered into his diary under the date of January 9, 1915:

'Patriotism' and 'War' are not human facts. They are merely abstractions; they belong to the sphere of metaphysics, just as much as those ancient theological conceptions of Godhead and the Trinity, with their minute variations, for the sake of which once Catholics and Arians so gladly slew and tortured each other. But as soon as the sunshine of real humanity makes itself felt the metaphysics of Patriotism and War are dissipated as surely as those of theology. When you have reckoned that your enemy is not an abstraction but a human being, as real a human being as you are yourself, why want to kill him any more than

you want to kill yourself? Patriotism and War are seen for what they are, insubstantial figments of fancy which it is absurd to materialise and seriously accept.

The third and closing sheaf of *Impressions And Comments* is considered by Ellis to be his most intimate book. He himself has given to the sub-title an air of finality which we may hope is but illusory. There is something in this seemingly sporadic notation of thoughts and feelings, — this almost random jotting down of musings about blackbirds and airships, sculpture and pacifism, dreams of fair ladies, cemeteries, music, sea-coasts, psychoanalysis, art and ugliness, — that is more honest essentially than those tomes in which philosophers build formidable systems for other philosophers just as formidable to break down. Existence, as seen through these apparent fragments, appears in its primordial oneness; "new" and "old" return to the dictionary, while Life maintains its eternal flux.

In these books are fleeting glimpses of an Ellis that we should like to have known so much better. Especially is this true of the comments upon the arts, — painting, sculpture, letters, music. In these paragraphs there is no display of technical lore, no theoretical discussion, but a straight piercing to the artist's vision. Schools, programs, manifestoes, pronunciamentoes, — these have little or no place in Ellis's criticism. Behind the printed page, the sculptured marble, the canvas, is an attitude toward the sorrows and joys of existence, a rarely personal view of the cosmos, a vital core for which all the theories and *artes poeticae* and manuals and café-chatter are but so

much tinder, fit to vanish in smoke once they have kindled fire from the spark and stirred the flame.

Particularly is this found to be true in the case of music, the art for which Ellis received the least technical preparation. There is a prejudice I have always cherished. It was born perhaps of an early devotion, and goaded certainly by the reams of persiflage about music that approach no nearer to the pith of the art than the extreme outer portals of notation. I believe one of the great tests of the innate critical faculty is the writing of musical criticism. Nor do I have in mind that legitimate technical discussion which is the proper concern of theorists and practitioners; rather I mean the revelation of those deeper implications which may be unguessed even by the creators themselves, and latent in the sensitive listener, — criticism in terms not of prices but of values. A striking example is to be found under date of February 24, 1918:

There seems to me a certain parallelism and a certain contrast between Beethoven's Fifth Symphony and Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony — a nobler work than the better-known Sixth, too heavily laden with unclarified emotion. I am not concerned with any questions of technique outside my competence, nor with any attempt to place the two works on the same plane of importance. I view them as revelations of their respective makers' inner self, each here revealing that self in its happiest normal phase. Both symphonies, it seems to me, deal with life as a Personal Problem, both follow a similar order, and both end joyously and triumphantly. But within this common scheme, how immense the contrast in temper and outlook! The symphonies start in a rather similar mood. Tchaikovsky, like Beethoven, is challenged by Life, and the challenge affects him

oppressively, mournfully. It is in the *Andante* which follows that one seems to feel the profound difference between the aggressive muscular Beethoven and the yielding feminine Tchaikovsky. The voice of beauty, that comes to the one as a seduction to weakness which must be repelled, comes to the other as a message of consolation which encourages and sustains. It is this contrast of attitude which differentiates the whole tone of the work. So it comes about that the *Andante* leads on naturally and by no revulsion to a mood of exalted light-heartedness which is yet serious. This yielding and feminine Tchaikovsky, we see, is not stimulated to energy, like the robust and ascetic Beethoven, by rebellion against the seduction of beauty; he can only attain to equanimity and strength by accepting the consolation of beauty. It is all of profound psychological interest. We see, too, incidentally, how in his next Symphony, — which I should be inclined to call the Homosexual Tragedy, — where Tchaikovsky was faced by the same challenge as Beethoven, and was forced to meet it in the same way, the end was bound to be, not the blare of triumphant conquest, but the deep groan of utter despair. Here, however, the finale attains the full expression of Tchaikovsky's gospel, in which beauty leads on to harmonious energy, and the initial challenge of Life is accepted, transmuted from the minor to the major mode, merged into triumph and gladness.

It is not clear how far a composer realises what he is showing of himself. Possibly if he realised he would hesitate. But it is easier in music than in any other art to elude the confession of self-revelation. Whether or not he knows — and I suspect he often knows — the emotional logic of personal temperament is deeper than all the subterfuges of art and can never be eluded.

The books written during the *Impressions And Comments* period, or published directly afterward, include *Essays In War Time*, 1916; *The Philosophy of Conflict*

(a second series of war time essays), 1919; *Little Essays of Love And Virtue,* 1922; *Kanga Creek,* 1922; *The Dance of Life,* 1923; *Sonnets With Folk Songs From The Spanish,* 1925.

Ellis's stand during the war, as we have seen, placed him with the few spirits in all countries who saw above the conflict. Yet it is necessary to distinguish his attitude from a merely over-emotional pacifism, though I for one find even such a pacifism a valid argument against the trained and equally over-emotional barbarity of the will-to-fight which is the primary purpose of all military discipline. "There is nothing that war has ever achieved," he declares in *The Philosophy of Conflict,* "we could not better achieve without it." The essays in war time, naturally, are much taken up with the passions of the conflict, yet there is not a trace of patriotic cant, not a syllable of compromise with the international shame. Though not underestimating the individual bravery of the men who on each side participated, tricked or smitten into the mêlée by idealisms worthy of a loftier application, he does not, on the other hand, underestimate the subtle cowardice inherent in all warfare. Here are pages written within sound, fairly, of the booming guns, while the France of his early love and the Germany of his early studies were being wracked by a war which at one time threatened to shatter his native country, yet their impassioned logic is above the heat of the contemporaneous passions.

There are other essays than those on war; there are literary and psychological appreciations, unostentatiously revealing one of the widest-ranging of latter-day minds.

Early in these pages I referred to the essay on Joseph Conrad, born of a lifelong allegiance to the sea, — that sea out of which we come and which, when humankind shall have polluted the earth with its filth, will return to perform its "priestly task of pure ablution."[1] Who, outside a few specialists, noticed in 1917 the death, in Italy, of the Uruguayan, José Enrique Rodó? How many, today, indeed, have ever heard of that South American Ariel? Yet Ellis, with the international vision that has from the first distinguished him, — the vision that introduced to England a Nietzsche and a Freud, found time in these trying days to write from far-off London a valedictory appreciation.

It should not be forgotten that the *Impressions And Comments* are also, from our present standpoint, little essays written during war time. Ellis kept his head, in the Menckenian phrase, while the band was playing. Not only kept it, but used it. Read any of his pages that date from distant, happier times; compare them with the later pages of troubled nights and days; the ones are as equable, as calmly thought and carefully phrased, as the others. This is not, surely, indifference; it is not Neronian music. It is superiority to the crass implications of our vaunted civilization. Such a war, after all, is but an orgastic detumescence of all the lies inherent in our peace. In such a peace, as in the "peace" that followed upon the war, Ellis believes as little as in war itself. His life, his writings, imply unceasing protest against it. A change of style, even for such a war, would imply a changed

[1] See, in *Impressions And Comments*, Third Series, the entry under December 15, 1920.

Ellis. No. He did not "cast off" the war; as always with repugnant things, he "let it fall."

Kanga Creek and the *Sonnets* have already been considered in relation to the epoch in which they were written and out of which they grew. There remain, then, the *Little Essays Of Love And Virtue* and *The Dance Of Life.*

The *Little Essays* distill, so to speak, the essence of the formidable *Studies in the Psychology of Sex.* I do not say that the *Studies* are meat for all palates. Psychical weakness is imitative and open to suggestion. For this reason, I sincerely believe that Ellis's masterpiece of sexual investigation should be kept away from pre-adolescents (who, for the rest, could hardly understand it) and from all members of anti-vice societies. On the other hand, I often have the feeling that even such works as the *Studies* might well receive first the scrutiny of the children to see whether their parents are fit to read them. This, precisely, is what Ellis has written of his own admirable *Little Essays of Love and Virtue.* "It is my hope that in this way" (he refers to the simple language in which the essays are couched) "they may surely come into the hands of young people, youths and girls at the period of adolescence, who have been present to my thoughts in all the studies I have written of sex because I was myself at that age when I vaguely planned them. *I would prefer,*" says Ellis (the italics are mine) "*to leave to their judgment the question as to whether this book is suitable to be placed in the hands of older people.* It might only give them pain. It is in youth that the questions of mature age can alone be settled, if they are ever

to be settled, and unless we begin to think about adult problems when we are young, all our adult thinking is likely to be vain. There are but few people who are able, when youth is over, either on the one hand to remould themselves nearer to those facts of Nature and Society they had failed to perceive, or had not the courage to accept, when they were young, or, on the other hand, to mould the facts of the exterior world nearer to those of their true interior world."

Reading these words for the first time, I was struck with their resemblance to a favorite passage of mine in Rodó's *Ariel*. "I hold with Michelet," says Rodó, "that the right idea of education does not include only the teaching to the minds of the sons the experience of the fathers, but as well, and often more, the informing of the fathers' experience with the innovating inspirations of the sons." [1] The contemporary revolt against Censorship, against the crabbed spirit that could see in an Ellis only a vile pander to social degeneracy, is just such a lesson of the sons to the fathers. The rising generation, as has always been its wont, has begun to question the confident and even mandatory dicta of its parents. It has played with fire and found that not always does it burn. It has reacted from excess of restraint in the direction of excessive unrestraint. It has been reading, listening, exchanging impressions. It has been learning about the human body, not from whispered séances of the semi-initiated, but from books on physiology, anatomy, hy-

[1] Ellis's attitude toward the young reader was clearly — and humorously — defined a quarter of a century before the *Little Essays*, in his now historical article, *Concerning Jude the Obscure*, which appeared in the October, 1896, issue of the famous though short-lived *Savoy*.

giene, sexology and psychology. This is all as it should be. Instead of brimstone objurgations from the pulpits of the unnaturally frigid, we have calm and reasoned enlightenment upon biological functions. Instead of the screaming sermons from old maids of either sex, we have orderly information conveyed in a dignified manner. Parental say-so has given way to filial do-so. Modern youth, tired at last of being lectured at, has begun to ask questions instead of merely taking answers. The true damnation of censorship is seen to lie in this: that it exercises compulsion upon experience that should be free.

The essays, short, but small only in extent, deal with *Children and Parents, The Meaning of Purity, The Objects of Marriage, Husbands and Wives, The Love-Rights of Women, The Play-Function of Sex,* and *The Individual and the Race.* How are the cramped censorious minds to understand such a sentiment as " It is passion, more passion and fuller that we need? " To such unfortunates the word summons visions of sensual orgies and unbridled bestiality. Yet see how Ellis relates our modern dearth of real passion to the bestiality called war.

The moralist who bans passion is not of our time; his place these many years is with the dead. For we know what happens in a world when those who ban passion have triumphed. When Love is suppressed Hate takes its place. The least regulated orgies of Love grow innocent beside the orgies of Hate. When nations that might well worship one another cut one another's throats, when Cruelty and Self-righteousness and Lying and Injustice and all the Powers of Destruction rule the human heart, the world is devastated, the fiber of the whole organism of so-

ciety grows flaccid and all the ideals of civilization are debased. If the world is not now sick of Hate we may be sure it never will be; so whatever may happen to the world, let us remember that the individual is still left, to carry on the tasks of Love, to do good even in an evil world.

In the evolution of contemporary youth the works of Havelock Ellis have played an important rôle. Youth is reading Ellis more and more, — all of him. It is responding to the spirit of youth that informs his every line. It comes back from his pages as from some haunt of Nature that is fresh with fragrant flowers and caressing winds. Ah! But there have been worms on the ground, say the censorious; there have been bees and spiders in the bushes; it has rained and snowed, and Nature has in other ways been indecorous. It is true, and it is sad; and it is also unimportant.

It is in *The Dance of Life* that Ellis concentrates the essence of his living. One may regard it as the complement to his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex.* In the *Studies,* the roots of life; in the *Dance,* the flower. In the *Studies,* the body; in the *Dance,* the soul. Yet these are no more separable entities than are root and blossom, body and breath.

The Dance of Life is a symphonic volume, written by the youngster of the poems, by the hero of *Kanga Creek,* after a lifetime spent in the service of life. It is the fulfillment of every impulse that throbbed in the teacher's veins as he stamped through the Australian bush declaiming verses to love, stirred by the promptings that he but half understood. Not only is it a spiritual summary of Ellis's career; it is an intellectual stock-taking of contem-

porary civilization. Its very title is a profound affirmation, a paean that drowns out the echoes of the medieval Dance of Death.

Life is a dance and the dance is the symbol of life. With Ellis it is as he says of Hippias, who was in the line of "those whose supreme ideal is totality of existence." That, too, is the ideal of Ellis, and the *Dance* is, in one aspect, an attempt to suggest that totality of existence. Out of the findings of the specialists, who slice the world apart into their various provinces, Ellis tries to reintegrate our spiritual universe. You must not be surprised to find that, in so doing, he quotes liberally from others and makes use of their results. Indeed, he seems to have anticipated this criticism and to have forestalled it by a very pertinent paragraph which I quote entire; it is the best reply to such criticism:

It is sometimes said (he declares, in his chapter on The Art of Writing) that the great writer seldom quotes, and that in the main is true, for he finds it difficult to mix an alien music of thought with his own. Montaigne, it is also said, is an exception, but that is scarcely true. What Montaigne quoted he often translated and so moulded to the pattern of his mind. The same may be said of Robert Burton. If it had not been so these writers (almost certainly Burton) could scarcely have attained to the rank of great authors. The significant fact to note, however, is not that the great writer rarely quotes, but that he knows how to quote. Schopenhauer was here a master. He possessed a marvellous flair for the fine sayings in remote books, and these he would now and again let fall like jewels on his page, with so happy a skill that they seem to be created for the spot in which

they fell. It is the little writer rather than the great writer who seems never to quote, and the reason is that he is really never doing anything else.

Life, to Ellis, is an art which may be subdivided into component arts. Those he considers after his luminous introduction are — and this list reads strangely, no doubt — The Art of Dancing, The Art of Thinking, The Art of Writing, The Art of Religion and The Art of Morals. Whereupon follows a conclusion in which an attempt is made to measure the mode of that life which is art. There are other arts which, because the book was growing too bulky, were denied the special chapters which Ellis had assigned to them. "The chapter I am most surprised to find missing," he wrote to me, under date of February 11, 1925, "is that on Building, for . . . dancing and architecture seem to me the two primary and fundamental arts. I am much interested in architecture, as you may have observed, and here in Guernsey I have been delighted to discover a genuine and native instinct for fine building in the cottages and houses. I had collected much material for the chapter but somehow I could never see my way to do it; that happens sometimes when one least expects it. Three other chapters were to be on the art of travelling (which I consider has meant a great deal for mankind from prehistoric times on, though it is now being lost), the art of cooking (in which I have taken a practical interest from 'Kanga Creek' days on, increased by a weak digestion) and dress, together with the questions of when, where and how far it can be dispensed with." Inasmuch as the material was long ago accumu-

lated, we may hope for these essays in the not too distant future.

In dancing, Ellis beholds the very rhythm of existence; it preceded the other arts. "To dance is to take part in the cosmic control of the world." I am reminded of an anecdote related of Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson. They had gone together to witness the ballet dancing of Fanny Ellsler, who was shocking Boston. "Waldo," exclaimed the unconventional Margaret, "this is poetry." Whereupon Emerson: "Hush, Margaret, it is religion!" Dancing, said Lucian, is as old as love, and Ellis reminds us that the art is as intimately associated with love as with religion: perhaps, as someone might suggest, because love and religion are so intimately associated with each other. "In innumerable parts of the world," we learn, "the season of love is a time which the nubile of each sex devote to dancing in each other's presence, sometimes one sex, sometimes the other, sometimes both, in the frantic effort to display all the force and energy, the skill and endurance, the beauty and grace, which at this moment are yearning within them to be poured into the stream of the race's life." I wonder whether the seeming madness of that now defunct craze, "marathon dancing" may not have been, partly at least, a recrudescence of this primitive spirit.

The important principle underlying the chapter on the Art of Thinking is that *science is art*. Quoting Keyserling, Ellis agrees that "The thinker works with laws of thought and scientific facts in just the same sense as the musical composer with tones. He must find accords, he must think out sequences, he must set the part in a neces-

sary relation to the whole. But for that he needs art." This is a profound statement; at bottom, man is everywhere the artist, and the application of his personality to his material — an inevitable conjunction — produces what we call art. So true is this inevitable personal element that Ellis later says, "We can never solve the so-called world-riddle because what seem riddles to us are merely the contradictions we have ourselves created." As for thinking itself, it becomes a regulated error: "Freud regards dreaming as fiction that helps us to sleep; thinking we may regard as fiction that helps us to live. Man lives by imagination." . . . "Molière's Jourdain had been speaking prose for more than forty years without knowing it. Mankind has been thinking poetry throughout its long career and remained equally ignorant."

The Art of Writing, to me, is one of Ellis's most enjoyable productions. He is, as one might have guessed, deeply aware of the important rôle played by the unconscious in all creative endeavor; the fetich of "progress" does not mislead him; he knows that when we take on the new we lose some good in the old; he does not waste weary moments over grammatical peccadilloes; indeed, he is of the opinion that there seems to be no more pronounced mark of decadence of a people and its literature than a servile and rigid

subserviency to rule. It can only make for ossification, for anchylosis, for petrification, all the milestones on the road of death. In every age of democratic plebeianism, where each man thinks he is as good a writer as the others, and takes his laws from the

others, having no laws of his own nature, it is down this steep path that men, in a flock, inevitably run.

And later in the same signal essay:

Every writer is called afresh to reveal new strata of life. By digging in his own soul he becomes the discoverer of the soul of his family, of his nation, of the race, of the hearts of humanity. For the great writer finds a style as the mystic finds God, in his own soul. It is the final utterance of a sigh, which none could utter before him, and which all can who follow.

In the chapter on The Art of Religion occurs that important biographical account in which Ellis traces the period of his emotional and intellectual expansion.[1] "One must win one's own place in the spiritual world painfully and alone. There is no other way of salvation. The Promised Land always lies on the other side of a wilderness."

Ellis's Art of Morals is as different from the current acceptation of morality as is his art of religion from the corpses of doctrine that lie buried in church and synagogue and his art of writing from the jerking skeletons that are galvanized into the semblance of life by lists of precepts. To him life is an art and the moralist is the critic of that art. The conception goes back to the Greeks, among whom the good and the beautiful were identical.

So influential a moralist as Aristotle remarks in a matter-of-fact way, in his Poetics, that if we wish to ascertain whether an act is, or is not, morally right we must consider not merely the intrinsic quality of the act, but the person who does it, the person to whom it is done, the time, the means, the motive. Such an attitude

[1] See pages 53–59.

towards life puts out of court any appeal to rigid moral laws; it means that an act must befit its particular relationship at a particular moment, and that its moral value could, therefore, only be judged by the standards of the spectator's instinctive feeling for proportion and harmony. That is the attitude we adopt towards a work of art.

We are thus brought to a moralistic relativity.

Ellis's Conclusion finds that the attempt to apply measurement to civilization is a failure. "That is, indeed, only another way of saying that civilization, the whole manifold web of life, is an art." We cannot, however, he points out toward the end, afford to do without the sane and wholesome persons who are so well balanced that they can adjust themselves to the conditions of every civilization as it arises and carry it on to its finest issue. Here, indeed, we have the great artists of Life, and Ellis himself answers to such a requirement. Emerson would have called him one of the world's representative men; on second thought, because of his preëminence and that of men like him, I would call them *unrepresentative* men, the breeding of which cannot be superintended by rule but by Nature herself.

The final words of this remarkable book are strikingly similar to the words which occur in the Postscript to Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*, Volume VI:

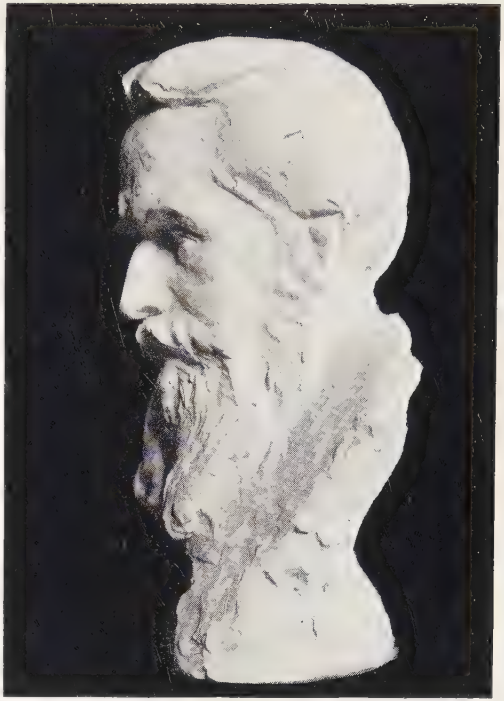
No creature on the earth has so tortured himself as Man, and none has raised a more exultant Alleluia. It would still be possible to erect cloisters wherein life would yet be full of joy for men and women determined by their vocation to care only for beauty and knowledge, and so to hand on to a future race the living torch of civilization. When we read Palladius, when

we read Rabelais, we realize how vast a field lies open for human activity between the Thebaid on one side and Thelema on the other. Out of such ashes a new world might well arise. Sunset is the promise of dawn.

Ellis is an intellectual Titan of our modern Renaissance; few realms of human activity are alien to his interest. Art, to him, is no mere canon of book and authority; it embraces all of life itself, which is distilled into those books through the personalities of their makers. He is himself a vast library in which life becomes articulate. In such as he the life of art and the art of life merge into the great unity that is significant living. Recluse though he has been, he has lived the Goethean motto:

> One look into books,
> And two into Life.

Larger even than Ellis's contribution to literature is his contribution to life as an art. He is an exemplar of the beautiful attitude. None may say of him that he has tried to dance a pretty course over life's amenities, skirting the ugliness of reality and concealing it from his mind by a vapor of dainty words. He has faced what the days and nights brought him; he has thought his way through and spoken his thoughts. Because of his noble wife, whose life was a similar dedication to the loftiest ideals, a few women in England today are different creatures; because of Ellis himself, men the world over have had a glimpse into worlds that else might long have been shut to them. "We have to be true to all the motives that sanctify our existence," he says in the opening essay of his *Little Essays;* such has been his own truth.



Bust of Ellis by Jo Davidson

A Late Photograph

His *Ave atque Vale* was written in his poetic youth. I choose the sonnet called The Bill of Lading; I might as easily have selected one of another dozen:

Within the hold they all together fare;
The searching spirit that must ever know,
The challenging eagerness to meet each foe,
The strong aspiring will to do and dare,
The silent gentleness to stand and bear
The world's disdain and never feel a blow,
Smiles, tears, sweet words, joys, griefs, that come and go,
Rankling desires that writhe within their lair.

O soul, upon this strangely freighted ship,
Loaded so deeply that the bulwarks dip,
Borne by a wind of such uncertain breath,
Though storms may bend the mast, though calm descend,
Keep a high courage until the adventure end,
Sail on across Life's billowing sea to Death.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Summary

I

SEEKING to appreciate the secret of Ellis's universality, of his bipolarity, we recur to our early metaphor of the sea. Too many have beheld the ebb of the waters only; too many, only the flow. It is the Ellises who know that ocean has both tides and that both are one. They know, too, that sunrise and sunset are illusions of the eye, founded upon yet another illusion which is the horizon; that light and darkness are not antagonists, but inseparable lovers. "Life," wrote Ellis in the first of his books, "has been defined as, even physically and chemically, a tension." In his *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* he has phrased the phenomenon more formidably, perhaps, as an alternation of tumescence and detumescence, whether in the sap of the tree where bud bursts into flower, or in the sap of the body where ovum bursts into life. Ellis's universality, his oneness with things, — what I have called his continual completion of circles, — is rooted in this procession of physico-chemical tension and relaxation. Others too often have seen the map of humanity as a sort of Mercator projection, in the flat; he has visioned it in the round as the globe that it is. He has heard not a single heart-beat of life, but both the systole and diastole of the vital rhythm. To this

roundness of vision, this ability to see circumferences rather than segregated arcs, to see not only tributaries but ocean itself, — is directly related his toleration. Even his style is a harmonious balance between the poetic and properly prosaic, — between, that is, the emotional and the intellectual aspects of living.

Herein, I would say, lies the great contribution of Ellis to the complex artistry of life. He stands as a great analyst who is an even greater synthesist. It was his good friend Remy de Gourmont, who, in an important essay on *The Dissociation of Ideas,* performed a valuable service by breaking up into their disparate components ideas which shone with a false, inorganic unity. This is a needed technique that Ellis has employed from the beginning. He has employed, however, as its necessary complement, a finer technique of what I may call the reintegration of ideas. He has, in other words, concurrently with his unostentatious but decisive demolition of crystallized conventions, just as unostentatiously and effectively rearranged the elements of life in new yet natural combinations. Ellis, in effect, has taught us how, for ourselves, to make life whole. Here, then, is a wholesomeness, not in the degraded, namby-pamby sense which it has acquired on the tongues of those who would apply it to innocuous goody-goodyness. Wholesome is Ellis in the olden sense of sound and healthy, — a whole man and a hale man.

Though he has looked at life from above, it has not been from an ivory tower. Though he has beheld it from his own secluded nook, he has been none the less very much of it. This has been, not indifference, but

control. In him, the actor may be, likewise, the spectator. "One is so often tempted in this world," he remarks,[1] "to allow oneself to be lashed into rage by its Intolerance, its Sordidness, its Imbecility, even its mere tame Monotony. And I am not at all sure that we do wrong to be angry, and that our Hate of Hate or our Scorn of Scorn is not fully justified. . . . Yet after all, let us never forget also that we have been so constituted as to be able to regard the World as a Spectacle." Not an ivory tower, this, but, in the Spanish phrase, a tower of "flesh and bone."

The World-as-a-Spectacle is essentially a mystic rather than a hedonistic conception. It is, just as essentially, an aesthetic attitude, stripping life of excrescence and superfluity and regarding it with a certain impersonality, as if it were a picture or a piece of music. Here is effected — and one realizes, after all, how imperfect is the language of psychological discussion — a union of the subjective and objective. For life, like art, — life, at once as the source and as the sum of the arts, — may have its "significant form," a unity that is organic. In such a sense of life, pain and discipline assume their proper places as elements of pleasure and liberation, just as death itself merges into the greater whole. Authority, rejected from without, derives at last from within. Thus Ellis's "sane anarchy" and the severe order of all true art become, despite the dictionaries, fairly identical.

The dictionaries. . . . And the grammar books. Excellent servants, but tyrannous masters. The "significant form" of language is not in the grammar books,

[1] *Impressions And Comments*, Second Series. Page 38.

where a specious logic reigns, but in the idiom of a tongue. There are those who live, as they speak, by the grammar books. There are those who live, as it were, not grammatically but idiomatically. Ellis's art, Ellis's life, have been in this sense idiomatic, — rational beyond formal reason, at that core where form and substance achieve identity. The idiom, in language, exemplifies Ellis's intuition of absurdity, it is an absurdity that, judged by the logic of language, means nothing. Yet it is something not only that has a clear meaning, but that expresses such a meaning in a manner far more effective than linguistic logic may devise. The idiom, in living, reaches similarly below the roots of logic to a deeper reason.

The World-as-a-Spectacle connotes that remarkable sense of personal proportion which is at the centre of Ellis's godless mysticism. He achieves a harmony of self with not-self, not by the megalomania of the religious fanatic, but by an intuition of proportion which is at the root of true humor.

From this point of view, Ellis's works reveal yet another harmony, — that of Occident and Orient. The Western mind, with its emphasis upon action, and the Eastern, with its tendency to immerse itself in contemplation, find in him that sector in which they overlap. By that same token, he rises above the limitations of either, and proves, in the poetry of his life, that despite the rhymester the twain may meet.

It is interesting, with this godless mysticism of Ellis in mind, to see what remarkable affinities it has with Asiatic thought; the same, indeed, may be said for that

other godless mystic, Nietzsche. With relation to Nietzsche this has already been shown, succinctly, by one of the few artists of life who understands equally well the West and the East. Reading the essays of Ananda Coomaraswamy one is impressed not so much by a sense of the hopeless gulf between Orient and Occident as by the numerous essential points at which thinkers and dreamers of both find themselves practically in agreement.[1]

Ellis may appear as a balanced Nietzsche, with his own valuation of values. Visiting Greece, indeed, in the spring of 1920, he sets down that "It is better, far better, to cultivate one's own taste, however bad, than to affect the taste, however good, of other people. My values are revalued. I follow my own instincts, I see with my own eyes."[2] Such a revaluation, then, acquires its fundamental sanction from oneself. "Be yourself!" was the slogan in the early days of Ibsen and Nietzsche, and remained for long, until came Freud; and then the slogan, like a fashion, changed to "Be your selves!" Ellis achieves his values by re-establishing them upon that self which has been so sadly caricatured by the eternal disciples, — those selfless, parasitic, mildly hysterical devotees who live only in the life of others.

Fundamentally the Ellisian and the Nietzschean revaluations are alike. They differ as the men themselves differ, since here are two real selves. There are persons, Ellis has written somewhere, who have no right to agree

[1] See *The Dance of Siva.* Fourteen Indian Essays, by Ananda Coomaraswamy. With an Introductory Preface by Romain Rolland. 1924.

[2] See *Impressions And Comments*, Second Series. Page 237.

with him. In Ellis, the revaluation, which opposes the conservatism of Nature to that stagnancy which man is wont to call conservatism, appears as a steady, all-pervading force. It is not, as in Nietzsche, barbed with epigram, scattering the shrapnel of its thought through dynamite volumes. It has about it something of the impersonality of Nature itself,—Nature as Ellis has seen it in the pleasantness of June days. "What is Man that thou art mindful of him?" sang the Psalmist. "But," paraphrases Ellis, in one of those illuminating changes from the sacred to the secular, "what is Man anyhow that Nature should be mindful of him?" Ellis is not an anti-Christ, the Nietzschean violence is not in him. He shines with the Gentler's light, but has a sweetness that is his alone. Sweetness and light! Formula that grew out of the bitterness and gloom that were the life of Jonathan Swift, and that finds its exemplification in the life and labors of Havelock Ellis. Sweetness and light, Ellis has written, are really inseparable. "Without a clear-eyed vision there can be no sweetness that is worth while, and without sweetness there can be no true revelation of light. Leonardo who was sweetest among men of art was at the same time the most clear-eyed among men of science." The words seem somehow linked to Ellis's early definition of Love as "the condition of right seeing."

II

In Ellis, from the time of the first published book, there has been little essential change. In him no well-

defined "periods" such as characterize those creative spirits who are always seeking, never finding, adjustment to life. In him no crises of the soul, after that strange conversion in the Australia of his youth, — a conversion which, as now we can see, was his own revaluation of values by the discovery of the self that determined them.

The search for frustration has become one of the fashions of the day. In the "new" biography we look now, often with prurience, for the flaw in personal character that determines the protagonist's career. Yet so doing, — and often with the best warrant, — we practise almost a canon of Greek criticism, and the tragic flaw in the heroes of Aristotle's *Poetics* assumes a peculiarly contemporary significance. Nor is this the only tie that binds the ancient Stagirite to the Viennese physician who has set free a flood of repressions.

In Ellis, however, is no discoverable frustration motif. I do not mean that he has had, from the outset, everything as he would wish it to be. That, indeed, would be, like perfection, a subtle and terrible frustration worse by far than the bogey of purity that haunted Mark Twain or the lure of class that fascinated Henry James. I mean that Ellis's life shows remarkable evidence of a plan early revealed to him and lived up to with practically undeviating steadiness. This was no blue-print arbitrarily set down as a guide to the builder; it was a spontaneous, instinctive manifestation, — the free expression of his nature, maturing inevitably like a flower or a tree, without the need of laborious direction. This is the essence of what once would have been called "divine inspiration."

Ellis has fallen short of his dreams, but that is what dreams are for. With the Australian conversion he made his peace with life, and kept it. Thenceforth he proceeds, not by frustration, but by fulfillment.

Pursuing the same track, however, we may discover, in his social shyness, the trait that has been sublimated into his life work and into the special attitude that he adopted, from the first, toward life. I am inclined to connect with this characteristic both his central interest in sex and his bias toward contemplation.

III

Ellis belongs in the line of Goethe, and of all those who, before or after, have served in life the ideal of totality. There is, in him, a serenity, a largeness, utterly at variance with the glittering, niggling fragmentariness of a generation that is pleased to style itself "modernistic." Because he has dealt with the eternally human he has a meaning for days that are to come after his own. It is part of his wisdom that we may own far more things than we possess, and that possession not always spells ownership. Men covet gold, and covet women, and live to lose the things they can grasp because they have not lived for the things that cannot be grasped. The glorious reality of life has slipped through fingers that wove a snare for wealth but only a sieve for beauty.

So we return to our starting-point: the artistry of life, a strange unity in which man is at once the maker and the made, the material and the worker, *natura naturans* and

natura naturata. Veritably, a microcosm, creature of the forces which at the same time he exemplifies and seeks to control. As a basis for that control is the indispensable recognition of those forces, — of life as a flux which to dam is to destroy. Life, the supreme art, is thus removed from the narrow surveillance of what some have called morality and becomes, like those arts out of which it is compounded, an aesthetic experience, "beyond good and evil," beyond sacred and secular, because it has had a glimpse into their essential oneness. Reality is thus not a province to be escaped from, but an essence to be sought and discovered. To participate in that discovery is to live as an artist. Freedom is but another name for such a living.

The greatness of Ellis does not lie in having brought that freedom to his world, for true freemen crave no boons; they must create the gift of their own freedom. It lies rather in having so lived it as to recreate it in others. He is one of Nietzsche's visioned Supermen, not because he is above mankind, — a sterile self-gratification that mirrors only the ambitions of a Subman — but because he represents the untrammelled development of man's finest potentialities.

"If I were ambitious," he has written, "I would desire no finer epitaph than that it should be said of me, He added a little to the sweetness of the world, and a little to its light." Happily, we may repeat the words, not as epitaph, but as epigraph to the beautiful book that has been his life.

The
Writings of Mrs. Havelock Ellis

The Writings of Mrs. Havelock Ellis

I

MARY McCROSSAN, the English painter, has set down [1] a brief but illuminating memoir of Edith Ellis as child, as girl and as woman.

"I could have been only eleven or twelve when I first saw Edith Lees at school. The strange blue eyes of a new girl shone across the class room. Girls and girls were between us but her vitality made a little shining path across them from her to me. Her father was ill, they were staying at Southport, and she came to school for the time with some of her cousins. A few years older than I, she was in a higher class, but in the same room, and her wonderful pale eyes were the first thing I saw that day she came. Very thin and like a boy she was: she had a boyish straddly walk and her hair was cut short, — an unheard-of thing at that time, — and she tossed a look back with a twist of her head. Her skin was a clear white and the lines of her face were fine: grave and a little austere. She did not smile much, but when she did it was with a sudden flash of her eyes.

"I think she was not very happy. Girls in those days were surrounded by fences, and she must often have been 'stirred with a hidden sense of wings', wings which were to carry her over most of our fences. She wrote her

[1] These reminiscences were written expressly for this book.

name in my birthday book and there it was to remind me, if I could ever have forgotten: Edith Mary Oldham Lees.

"Several years later I met her again in Southport and once, in the street, we had a little talk. She was grown up, but still very young and slim, in a black dress to her ankles. Her father was dead,[1] and she, I think, living in London — whereat I was filled with envy. She told me she was writing a story, 'Love and Honour' it was called, and it was appearing in a new magazine.[2] Perhaps it was a good magazine for it died young, and the story was never finished. It was well written, but more sophisticated than her later work.

"She looked much the same, her eyes rather prominent, and of an almost translucent blue; all the lines of her body were harmonious with the pure lines of her face and the whole alive with an intelligence I was little used to in Southport. She made everyone else look commonplace. I did not meet her again for many years and heard nothing of her adventures or of her marriage — but I never forgot her.

"Years later, in the pursuit of art, I stayed at St. Ives and there heard many controversies about Mrs. Havelock Ellis. The more conventional people were perpetually shocked, and the devotion of her friends made some pretty arguments. Again, some years later, I was at St. Ives and someone told me she had a cottage, which she let furnished, at Carbis Bay. I was tired and the cottage appealed; and more than that — to say truth almost the whole motive — I wanted to meet Mrs. Have-

[1] He died at Salt Lake City on a visit to America.
[2] She was then nineteen.

lock Ellis. So I wrote and asked her about the cottage and she told me to call. I went to Carbis Bay and was shown into an upstairs sitting room looking across the fields. A little, stout woman greeted me from her chair at a writing table in the window and I sat down and talked to her. I did not recognise my old friend, but I made a new one. Her eyes — her vitality — her short hair, all was delightful and intriguing. After a few minutes she rose and walked across the room with a rather straddling gait, her feet well apart. Something stirred in my memory. I said: 'You do remind me of someone I used to know.' 'Who was that?' she rapped out. I remembered the name by degrees. 'Edith — Mary — Oldham — Lees.' She laughed out. 'Why! I *am* Edith Mary Oldham Lees.'

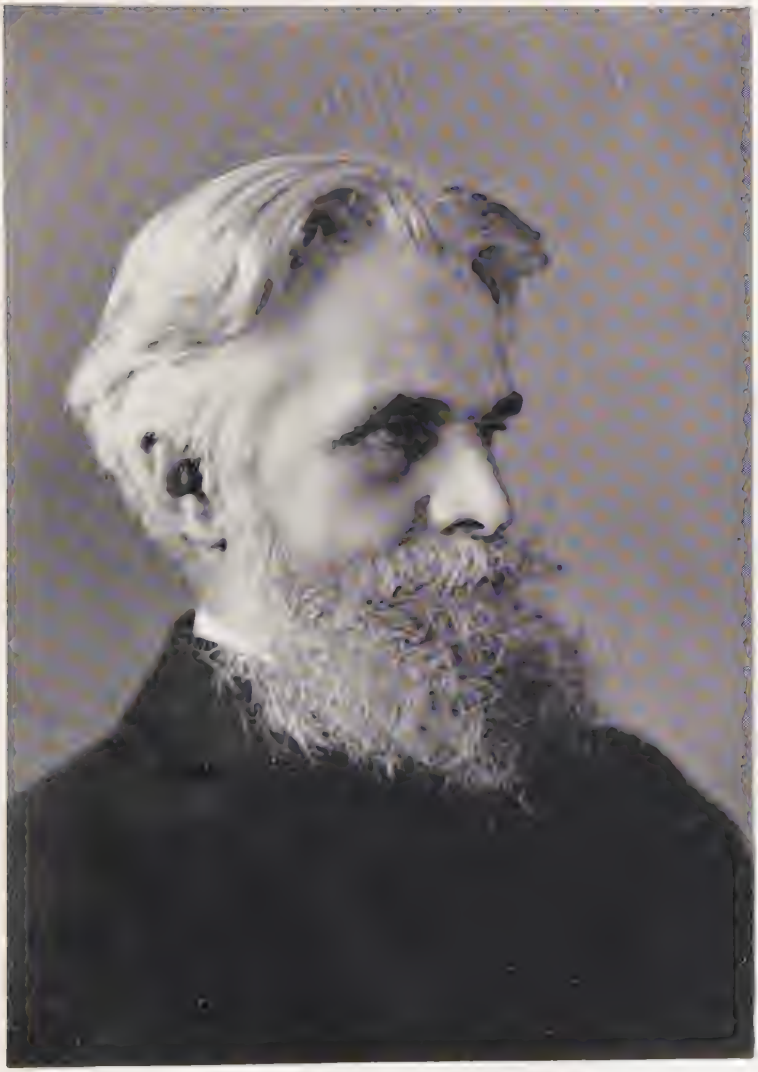
"It was like a fairy tale, lovely and incredible. She was fifty she told me, and it was more than thirty years since I had seen her. I think she liked me for remembering the girl she was. I achieved the cottage and she asked me to dine. I met Mr. Ellis, marvelling at my own utter luck. An amazing contrast — she all sparks and forthcomingness, he with an intense still quietness.

"Others know more of that part of her life than I, though I talked to her many times — the last, at the Lyceum Club not long before she died. Attractive always to me, from the moment I saw her at school I felt that, in some queer way, she 'belonged.'"

Into all the descriptions of Mrs. Havelock Ellis by her intimates and acquaintances has crept something of the vivacity that characterized the woman herself. Whether in uncritical affection or in that surge of friendship which

rightly has little to do with cold logic, they speak of her radiant nature, of her electric personality, of her fondness for company and her ineradicable, even incorrigible, social instincts.

Into the writings of Mrs. Havelock Ellis went this personality, — a strange and complex entity that might have been partly guessed from the evidence of her pages alone. What she was to the personality of the man she married, her books are to his. In him, as man and as author, was a certain dispassionate, impersonal, cosmic note that harmonized surely with her own, but that just as surely was no unison. The unhappiness of her early years is suggested now and again in a certain tension that tightens her pages, even as it tightens the throat of a speaker deeply moved. There is, on occasion, the delicate aura of neuroticism, contrasted, as so often, by a gaiety that is the other face of sadness. She romps, and she broods. Her prose leaps, then it may saunter. By that same token its surface life is more varied, more direct of appeal than that of her husband. It is the stylistic evidence of her ebullition, of her uncertain moods, as his prose is the evidence of an inner strength and composure. For Mrs. Ellis, in her girlhood days, had achieved no "conversion," had reached no peace with self and the universe. Ellis, to his good fortune, early found himself; Edith Lees, in a sense, remained a seeker. The nature of her writings, their variety, their style, — these alike betray a certain unrelenting restlessness that found vent, if not complete satisfaction, in practical as well as spiritual activities. Of theories alone she is manifestly impatient. She raises poultry, runs a dairy, breeds



Ellis in 1915

Seaforth in His Wife Taken by Ellis About 1903, at Court House, Carbo Bay. She Was Recovering from An Illness

stock in Cornwall; she redeems ordinary cottages with a fine taste and lets them out to sensitive sojourners; she mothers the New Fellowship with a sense of practicality that not all the members shared; she not only writes her opinions, she speaks them from the lecture platform.

In Mrs. Ellis, then, whether as girl or as wife, was a need for action. In ordinary life this found vent in a rich sense of humor and a ready, pliant social responsiveness. In the sphere of ideas this made of her, in the better sense of the word, a propagandist. There is, about her, especially in the New Fellowship days before her marriage, before the communal disillusionment that developed her latent humor, a suggestion even of the apostolic. She carries a "message." She appears to have had leanings toward psychism. Marguerite Tracy, in the introductory notes to *The New Horizon in Love and Life*, writes of her that "she saw with an internal and prophetic vision; knew often more by intuition than by material knowledge, and had at moments a quite uncanny gift of divination. A mutual friend has told me that she was once startled at Mrs. Ellis's affirming of her sturdy little boy who had just entered the room, and whom she had never seen before, 'This is a premature child, isn't it?' and on being with some surprise corroborated and asked how she had guessed, 'I was a seven months' child myself, and I can feel them.'" That the remark was more than a jest is to be gathered from more than one tale by Mrs. Ellis. A "feeling" for children born prematurely puts a strain upon one's credulity; such "divination" as Mrs. Ellis possessed — and there is too much testimony of her strange effect upon her surroundings

for us to doubt it — may well have derived from a fine sensitivity that is not uncommon in electric natures. "Divination," indeed, is an excessive sensitivity by means of which reactions are heightened and quickened. Add to such a gift that touch of the dramatic which so delighted Edith Ellis and we have the material for personal legends.

In this keenness of response we may have, too, the explanation of Edith Ellis's dual nature, — her alternations of exaltation and depression. She has little or nothing of her husband's equanimity. In her writings the two strains are distinctly visible, and always overlaid with the necessity for action. It had been her ambition to be someday the pure artist, the lover of sheer beauty. It is doubtful whether it was in her nature to achieve this fully.

See how, in her books, this necessity suggests the particular forms of her expression. Least of all is she at home in the province of philosophical discussion. Most of her essays, indeed, are transcribed lectures, or originate in the lecture-idea. They have a spoken quality, and induce almost the illusion of a speaking presence. Fiction is a more natural medium, and even here, it is the dramatic rather than the narrative element that most appeals to her. Of her three novels, it is the shortest that is the best, and one is not surprised to hear that this, as well as some of her short stories, made good dramatic material for the stage. Edith Ellis had all the qualities of the born playwright. One after the other of her short tales could, with but slight technical alteration be made into a stage piece.[1] They are, virtually, as much

[1] See the Bibliography.

plays as stories. In fact, with ease she turned four or five of them into playlets. The first, *The Subjection of Kezia,* dramatized by her during recovery from an illness and sent to a manager she did not know, was accepted by return of post. For a long period it was used in several London theatres as a curtain-raiser. Other of her playlets were produced at the Little Theatre, Chicago, during her American visit. *The Pixy* is said to have been especially effective. Edith Ellis was gifted as a mimic and often had her friends roaring at imitations of people they knew. As a school girl and later in life she occasionally took part in amateur theatricals. The theatre was her favorite relaxation. It is not therefore surprising that her short essays upon the men and women whose minds and personalities attracted her are notable for an almost inerrant selection of the traits that dramatize them in one's esteem.

It is characteristic of this necessity for action, for convincing others, for presenting as well as probing, that whatever she wrote grew directly out of her own experience. To her, writing in a word, was a phase of action.

II

I am inclined to consider her very first book the best thing that she ever wrote. Not that only; *Seaweed: A Cornish Idyll,* 1898 (afterward reprinted as *Kit's Woman,* and in 1909 issued in America as *Steve's Woman,* with a modification of the dialect) is one of the remarkable novels of its generation. One feels, here and there, that Mrs. Ellis is speaking a word for a favorite

theme, — that, in the coarser sense of the word, she is propagandizing. Yet here, as in the later short stories, there is generally a complete triumph over the mere advocacy of views. Mrs. Ellis felt herself, rather than thought herself, into *Kit's Woman*. The background of the Cornish fishing village is sketched in quickly, with no suggestion of that intrusive " local color " which once was sought after by novelists who lacked the living stuff of story. The various characters are painted in with rapid, but not thick strokes; the dialogue, as so often with Mrs. Ellis, is concentrated, humorous, and pithy with the accents of drama.

There is Kit himself, and his wife Janet. Kit is a powerful miner who has been paralyzed in the lower limbs by an accident, and is forced to spend his days puttering about the house, where he has to be moved about from place to place. Janet is a vigorous, attractive outsider, in love with her man, yet feeling passionately the need of the child that Kit can no longer give her. Kit's eighty-year-old mother looks helplessly on, with one ear cocked to the eternal gossip of the neighbors and the other to Kit's brooding silence. Janet, beautiful and filled with the lusts of womanhood, faithful to a cripple? The village will not have it. It cannot be. Her trips to the witch doctor for the healing seaweed must be a pretense. She has other reasons for these absences.

Kit hears the chattering magpies as they bring his mother the daily gossip. He hears, too, another voice, inside himself. Is it just that Janet should carry her grief to the grave? Isn't there something wrong with a dispensation that chains a woman in the prime of her

passion to a paralytic? He loves her with all the madness that once shook his powerful frame. Since first he saw her she has changed for him the face of all womankind. They had been toys to play with; she has taught him love. And to what tormenting purpose?

Goaded at last to the desperation of putting his inner queries to the parson, he unburdens himself one day to that local dignitary. The parson is thunderstruck. He has prepared himself to listen indulgently to the peccadilloes that daily assault his ear. And here is a man asking him whether it be right to let his wife know another man! Kit, once started, is not to be side-tracked. He is a paralytic; his wife is the very flower of womanhood; he loves her, she loves him, but as a husband he is useless to her. Why may she not have a child by another, and yet remain as lover his own?

While Kit is putting these heretical questions to the parson, Janet has already succumbed to the attraction of another man. Coming to meet him for the second time she reproaches herself and him. She had meant to tell Kit everything, but her courage had failed her at the last moment. And now someone has seen them together and the village tongues will soon be clacking her knell. Janet has not ceased to love Kit; something stronger than herself has thrown her into the other man's arms; something stronger than herself, stronger than he, takes her back to him. And when she tells the story to Kit, something stronger than all of them opens his arms to her in welcome and in thanks. Her child shall be his child; the father of it may have his place in their home with Janet and Kit and the child if so he wishes.

Janet, seemingly deserting Kit, has been coming closer to him all the time. Through the other man she has found herself and him. The greater freedom, as in Ibsen's *Lady From the Sea,* has wrought the greater love. The possessiveness of jealousy, rooted out of the soul, has given place to a deeper possession that transcends acquisition. And all this, mind you, not by fleeing the flesh, not by renouncing, but by embracing it in a larger circle.

"There's a darned lot of miracle work, strikes me, going on in women," says Kit to his woman, during one of their talks, "as perhaps God Hisself scarcely reckoned on when He started 'em." And another time, to the cleric: "It's that sort of lesson a feller learns when he grows to love a woman better nor hisself, and I'm fast coming to think as books can't tell you much about it." Here we detect the overtones of Mrs. Ellis's beliefs, ringing through the voice of Kit; yet, as I have said, the artistry of the tale is barely dimmed by such suggestions of special pleading.

Kit's Woman, to me, despite the daring of the plot as it stands, has yet more daring implications. The case, difficult as it is, is rendered less objectionable by the hopeless condition of the husband and the undiminished vigor and intense passion for a child that characterize Janet. It is not the general rule that one of the parties is helpless and the other superlative in mind and body. There are more subtle variations, in which the possible field for possessive jealousy, for the dog-in-the-manger attitude, is inevitably broadened. Here comes such a test of true love as Kit is not brought to face. Yet even in such a case,

one is at liberty to imagine, Mrs. Ellis would have known that the course of deeper love — for man and woman alike — would be little altered in circumstance from what we have seen in this vivid and powerful tale.

Attainment, 1909, and *Love-Acre*, 1914, do not attain to the artistic roundness and authenticity of *Kit's Woman*. The first of these represents a young woman's quest for spiritual completion; the second, hovering between earth and the paradise of delirium, is essentially a similar story, in which the protagonist has become a forsaken little boy. Each is an idealized version of the woman's youth, — a not too happy childhood, beset with bodily ailments and a starvation of the spirit. In asserting an essential similarity between the stories I do not mean to indicate anything like an outward resemblance; I have in mind rather their probable psychological origins.

Attainment, as a novel, is of importance almost solely for its thinly disguised autobiographical elements. As art it is far inferior to *Kit's Woman* and much below *Love-Acre*. For once, through this tale of the heroine's unhappy home, her search for new ideals, her liberation from religious cant and empty philanthropy, her progress toward — and eventual deliverance from — sociological cant and communistic experiment, Mrs. Ellis reveals plainly her purposive and propagandistic intent. There are many outward signs of haste and more than one inward. Thus, it surely was not the author's intention to hold up marriage as a woman's goal of attainment. Yet this, precisely, is the notion conveyed by the hasty closing chapters. What is more, the marriage falls into the book as if thrust violently from behind. The love affair between

Basil Sargent (who there stands partly for Havelock Ellis) is of the sketchiest, — almost an arbitrary intrusion.

Among the other real characters who appear in this partial *roman à clef* are William Morris, Stopford Brooke, Thomas Davidson and even some of the servants who ministered, as companions, to the wants of both Havelock and Edith Ellis.

All that we may save from the narrative is compressed into a stray sentence or two, indicative of Mrs. Ellis's opinions. "Life," declares one of the men, "should surely be as fine an art as love, and neither life nor love have had their full chances yet. . . . We are all in the nursery." And Rachel, who is an aspect of Edith Lees before her marriage to Havelock Ellis, declares, "Women soon learn that consciously or unconsciously, to us, love is the mystic thing, and it cleans, just because it is both beauty and fire." Or, again, seeming to balance the words of that quondam monk, the unsaintly Rabelais, with the words of a quondam Rabelaisian turned saint: "'Love and do what you like,' said St. Augustine, and he ought to have been canonized on that one sentence."

Mrs. Ellis wrote her real *Attainment* not in this novel but in that posthumous collection of essays entitled *The New Horizon in Love and Life*. There we shall find the opinions of Rachel set down frankly as such, without the disadvantage of a commonplace plot that is too close to life to be art, and not near enough to art to be life.

Of *Love-Acre* it is difficult to speak in the conventional terms of novelistic criticism. It is as much poem as novel and it is as far as may be from the realistic surroundings

of *Attainment*. It is, to paraphrase the saying of the fairy Fan-Fan who visited little Tobias in his strange visions, a sort of flying without wings, a dreaming without sleep, a seeing from within. The real action of *Love-Acre* takes place within. Technically, indeed, the book is notable for a daring flight into fantasy without leaving the earth. Just as Tobias's body lies dreaming its poetic fancies without stirring from its spot, so the book manages to cling to reality for all its poetry and divination.

As a flock of crows cawed over his head they said "Mad, Mad, Mad." Tobias, as he fell asleep, as was his way when the messages reached him, murmured "Glad, Glad, Glad," but the Moon, the Stars, and the Stillness which precedes the Storm kept their Secrets.

In all this there is a touch of delicate, even tender psychism of compensation for childhood lack and loss. The later woman, mothering the world, would seem to be shielding future children from the need of Tobias's compensatory realm. For, in this book, she is Tobias, and we are not surprised to hear the simple lover speak to his lass much as Rachel spoke in a former novel.

"Life," answered Tobias softly and bent over her to take out the dead flowers from her dress. "The great secrets seem very near and I'm dazed and joyful to once'st." He looked at the dead flowers in his hands. "They be overcome too, and no wonder, but they'm dead and no use to you now. I'm alive, Loveday, and your Boy. See!" He knelt over her on one knee and she lay on the bank of the pond. A shiver like the wind makes when the sun kisses the daffodils passed over her.

"It's all we was born for," said Tobias.

Her upper lip trembled as she looked into his face. She could not move, and he could hardly speak, but in a deep whisper he ended: "It's a fire and ice together and a great hush and gallop all in one. It's a frenzy and yet the peace of the falling snow is in it. I've never been near it before. It's like a voice and a light in one."

A madness and a gladness indeed! What, in truth, is *Love-Acre* but a commingling of the two? Tobias is a seven months' child, and as Mrs. Trewidden would have told you, such children "aren't never the same as others, I've heard. It's allus a toss which they belongs to have, extra good luck or awful disaster." Had you asked Tobias, after his adventure with marriage, after his fathering of another man's child, after his Loveday's forgetfulness of him, he would have answered perhaps that he had had both the disaster and the luck. Such as he are not for the world; they are not *of* the world in the first place. A love-acre awaits them.

If, in *Attainment*, we have the social aspect of Mrs. Ellis, in *Love-Acre* we have the psychic. In either novel is a lack of balance. It is as if, in *Kit's Woman*, she had written the real novel in her, attaining a fine balance of atmosphere, mood, character and theme; and as if, in the other two, she had willed two phases of her personality into novelistic being.

III

The shorter tales of Mrs. Ellis were first presented in her collection entitled *My Cornish Neighbors*, 1906; they were added to, some five years later, by those in *The Im-*

perishable Wing. Other stories have been reprinted for the first time in *Stories and Essays*, 1924, while *The Mine of Dreams*, 1925, comprises a selection from the first two volumes. This last is the only accessible volume of Mrs. Ellis's short stories.

To the selection, which appears substantially as she made it not long before her death in 1916, has been added the last Cornish story she wrote, — "Porky's Cissy." The earliest of the stories goes back to 1902, when the Ellises had gone to Aix-les-Bains upon the advice of Mrs. Ellis's physician. It was here, during her convalescence, that the first idea of a Cornish story had come to her; she sent the tale to Mr. Pethwick Lawrence, at that time editor of a London evening newspaper, and he promptly printed it in *The Echo*. Many of the subsequent tales are founded upon fact; more of them, however, owe their origin to emotional and spiritual situations, as Mr. Ellis points out in his short note to the tales.

I find in these stories the woman of the essays. Here she presents, in the quaint dialect of her Cornish neighbors, and through the lens of their simple, yet fresh and probing mentality, the emotional aspects of those questions that in her essays she has considered from the intellectual standpoint. Perhaps, instead of "questions" I should say "human situations," for her gift was for concrete circumstance. She fills her stories with the radiance of her personality. One can almost see her talking to these peasants and fishermen; one can almost hear them reply, in accents that recall the lowly folk of Hardy and Phillpotts. (Mrs. Ellis's village in Cornwall puts me in mind, indeed, of Phillpotts's *Widecombe Fair*.)

Among these ingenuous villagers Mrs. Ellis found most to her interest the selfsame problems that attracted her in London. These were love, living and death. The village, like the larger world of which, after all, it is but a miniature replica, has its philosophers, its mystics, its heretics, its conservatives, its lovers and its louts. Even here there are stirrings toward a better world within and without. Tenderness, cropping up amidst uncouthness, refuses to beat woman into submission. A triangular domestic complication is brought to a most unexpectedly peaceful settlement by the meeting of the two women concerned; or, rather, by the straightforward confrontation of one by the other, in which a threatened hostility gives way to a finer understanding. A half-crazy lover of corpses gropes his way toward a philosophy of the after-life. " Immoral moralities " yield to an enrichening comprehension of spiritual realities. Life and Death appear as twins.

Into all these tales, of course, has gone Mrs. Ellis's attitude toward life. Yet there is hardly any evidence of inartistic purposiveness. One detects her attitude in such episodes as that with the corpse-lover.

> Summat I heard once about peace as knocks most things out of reckoning came to me, [he says to her] and I've never been really scared since. Gossip don't hurt me, in a manner of speaking, more nor a gnat bite. It was like as if the young girl's fear had turned into something quiet as stilled mine. We'd both been afraid of different things, but there was something about that corpse that I've looked for since in others but I've never found it. Perhaps it was a sudden answer to prayer, but I ain't religious enough to know.

"Religious," she echoes. "You're making it a new word to me."

So, too, her Nurse, in the story of that name, may exclaim, "Morality is a word as makes me very sick. In my life it's meant only hinderment and cruelty." And her Selina, in *The Mothers:* "Women be much of a muchness; they be unlike men folkses." Or Christiana, in the tale of *The Bed-lier* (Cornish English for invalid): "Never lock up nothing, my dear, that you prizes, and then you don't get it took from you." And, as a closing quotation, one from the same tale, that applies to the writer herself, and to her universality of outlook. "Many be the time," says Wilmot, "I've been led to mix the bad and the good when listening to she, for she'd allus a kind word for both."

Always a kind word for both. One feels in Mrs. Ellis, as in her husband, that sympathy which is the kinder face of understanding. It was Olive Schreiner who found in Ellis a paradoxical commingling of a Christ and a faun; Mrs. Ellis could have seen the Christ in a faun and the faun in a Christ. A Jester and a Joannes she was, who understood with equal passion the two Marys with whose names the figure of Christ has been associated in the history of his legend: Mary the Virgin and Mary of Magdala.

Isn't this, really, the underlying contrast that is presented in her short story, *Dolores,* which appeared originally in the *Smart Set* (1909)? Here she has created, out of an experience in Spain, a twofold symbol of woman in her dual rôle as selfless saint and selfless sinner, alike the victim of man.

IV

The critical writings of Mrs. Ellis comprise *Three Modern Seers,* 1910; *James Hinton: A Sketch,* 1918; *The New Horizon in Love and Life,* 1921, and the essays included in *Stories and Essays,* 1924. An appreciable amount of this, as we have seen, grew out of her lectures, and it is not surprising to find that they retain, even in print, the vivacity of her glowing speech. Thus the material appearing posthumously in *The New Horizon* covers a period reaching from 1891 — the date of her earliest successes before the Ancoats (Manchester) Brotherhood — to her latest American lecture in 1915.

In much of this work there is an occasional token of impatience, — that eagerness to be through with the task which we have already discovered in the novel, *Attainment.* But in place of that excellence which now and again she achieves in her short tales and in *Kit's Woman,* she gives us in these essays and lectures a phrase and a cadence so highly charged with her own personality that we readily surrender the more purely artistic qualities for these stylistic intimacies. Her lines have flash, vigor, movement; like herself, they are dynamic. One American critic, John Macy, who has always been sensitive to the artistry of words, has commented upon her "vigour and passion — and a sharp boldness of phrase which it is not unfair to her sex to call masculine."[1] In most of what she has written is terseness and strength. For she was a woman, not a social stereotype.

To her, as to her husband, life was an art that had to be

[1] *The Freeman.* January 18, 1922.

defended against the intrusion of the accidental. But into her talk and writing crept an element that is foreign to his, — the tendency found in her fiction toward a mysticism that is evasion rather than as, in his case, discovery. It has been brought against her that she had an excessive faith in mere statute. This may be true, in so far as the letter of her writing goes. It is fundamentally related to her fine impatience, her eagerness not only to plot a problem but to do something, anything, so long as a practical step had been taken toward actual solution. Mrs. Ellis, we must not forget, was a social creature; she dwelt among seeking, suffering persons, not only among ideas. Her contact with the world was more varied, more constant, than was her husband's and her immediate need for action correspondingly greater. If a law could ease the way, then by all means a law. The law, however, was no fetich in her eyes. She was, at bottom, a law-breaker, since, as she would have paraphrased, the law was made for woman, not woman for the law.

The pith of her ideas is to be found at best in *The New Horizon*. In the book on Hinton she seems to be troubled by the mass of material, by the sorting of ideas and the necessity of keeping clear her rôles as expositor, as critic and as one with ideas of her own upon every subject brought up. In her essays, deep-seeing as now and again they are, she is concerned chiefly with presenting another personality, though she cannot keep herself out of the picture. She has seen Edward Carpenter, Hinton, Oscar Wilde, Nietzsche, Ellen Key, Olive Schreiner, Van Eeden and her own husband with an independent vision that is blurred only by her humane tolerance and her somewhat

too-inclusive enthusiasms. Arthur Symons, as Mrs. Ellis has written, said of Havelock Ellis that one of his photographs looked as if he were "a little tired of all that he desired." In Edith Ellis was at times a weariness of the body, but never of the soul. She seems to have the fervor of a missionary, without any of the militant arrogance, however masked in humility, that goes with the propagation of any faith. Many of the minor changes that she advocated have come slowly to pass. A new freedom for woman appears, and in this, the Ellises have played an important, if relatively inconspicuous rôle. It is not an accident that they should have known the leading feminists of their day and generation, — the Schreiners, the Goldmans, the Keys, the Sangers.

At times the predictions of Mrs. Ellis have been fulfilled in ways that she might not have previsioned. I happen upon one of her pronouncements about beauty in the home.

> Every home or room should be the expression of the personality owning it, and in these various experiments experts are needed to know how to carry out individual ideas and tastes. From the cleaning of saucepans to the hanging of pictures a large organisation of women is imperative who know their work and can teach others technically to follow her lead. There is no reason why an elaborate and world-wide scheme on these lines should not be started at once. It implies instant employment, a break-up in congested industries, a good financial and healthy life for women and a boon to every member of the community, either directly or indirectly. Beauty is worthy of complete emphasis, but under present conditions it is subordinated to commercialism. The ostracism of the doll's house, the bird-cage, and the prison

will mean emergence for both men and women. The true emancipation is to deliver woman from economic pressure and find new channels for her manifold maternal powers.

What interests me, for the moment, in this passage is not its vigorous confidence; not its pursuit of a general idea down to its most quotidian details; not its possible reference to the writer's own thwarted maternal desires.[1] It is, rather, the art of "interior decorating" as it has evolved at this later day, and not always in the direction of Mrs. Ellis's beauty. Instead of helping the individual, it has thus far cheated him of his own experiences with a personal taste and has even standardized a sort of domestic snobbery in the arts. It has, in a word, been commercialized by the same factors that Edith Ellis fought in her lectures.

It is so even with the loftier of her ideas and ideals. Yet it is good that the notions of the pioneer be caricatured in the efforts of the emotionally and intellectually ill-balanced. No valid idea is ever the worse for ridicule. At the bottom of Mrs. Ellis's outlook is that same passion for individual freedom which burns with a steadier flame in her husband's life and works. The great individuality, as she often emphasized, has in it an amalgam of the man, the woman and the child. It was her special province to safeguard that triplex individuality by rescuing from the welter of prejudice and inertia the body and soul of woman. With her sense of the practical she built upward from economic reality, though she had moments

[1] The Ellises had no offspring. In Ellis himself was never any strong desire of paternity; Mrs. Ellis, however, was advised by her physicians against having any children.

when from the other end she took flights into the empyrean. Essentially, however, she is right. The freedom she foresaw could not be built upon the social injustice inherent in the system that she knew.

That freedom was and is incompatible with the standards that have been evolved from that system. If she spoke of marriage as a sacrament, it was in no ecclesiastical or conventional sense; marriage, for her, had its sacredness inherently in itself, and she could view it with a rationality that frightened her contemporaries. She advocated novitiates for marriage, semi-detached marriages (they have become relatively common), eugenics not as a fad but as a purification. Love, of course, in her eyes was a fine art and "real lovers are as rare as real artists." She saw in it something beyond sentimentality and physiology.

The lover of the future will shun bought love in any form as the true artist will shun pot-boiling in any shape. The lover cannot shun experience: these are inevitable in all lives not bound down to the inanely commonplace, but he will shun all things which threaten the corruption or disruption of the vision of love which as a child and as a youth he has seen. Love can never admit of lies in its passionate relationships; it can never truckle for an instant to the maxims of worldlings or the tests of mere saints; it must bud and flower and seed according to the laws of its being, and guard, more jealously than even a maid her virtue, the freedom of the one to whom it surrenders itself. To bind is to lose. Jealousy, still almost the worst and meanest sin of the old and the new lover alike, must have no quarter in the new code of love as a fine art. When through childhood and youth a man has at last come to what he thinks is his own, and

taken the woman of his choice to his heart, let him know that his education has only begun, for his courtesies must be doubled; his attitude as love, combined with that of husband, must be a blending of friendship, sumradship, and lovship, but never a tyranny. Absolute possession in persons or purses is as out of date as feudalism.

In this book, as in her *Attainment*, she quotes the "Love and do as you like" of St. Augustine. The fulness of her meaning, however, depends not upon the seeming wilfulness of the second injunction, but on the deeper implications of the first.

Edith Ellis's feminism saw beyond the mere vote for woman, beyond the tactics of the militant, beyond the "holiness" of war. In vivisection she beheld only cruelty, by which token she could be sentimental. Yet we are glad to take her worst with her best, in the feeling that one somehow is nurtured by the other. Thus, if we are skeptical of such epithets as "The Eternal," and get to feel sometimes that they were more than metaphors to her, we readily overlook them as purely personal matters, for in the same remarkable essay (that on The Philosophy of Happiness) we find an observation that shines right through the questionable metaphysics, dimming it in a brighter light:

Few happy people sin, for most social sins are subterfuges for joy. The solemnity and absurdity of our crude moralities, the fear of losing ourselves in unrealized possibilities, the cowardice of much so-called purity and the recklessness of so much vice handicap us on our way to perfect happiness.

Once we become lovers in the real sense we are safe. The

lover is only concerned lest he loses his vision of love, or fails loved ones in their need.

The Philosophy of Happiness, despite its brevity, summarizes her life and experience. It contains the quintessence of her infectious idealism. In it she becomes the interpreter "who has merged pain in the redemption of joy . . . a divine jester, who is able to express the subtle connection between the anguish and gaiety which lie at the heart of things." The element of anguish Edith Ellis early subjugated, amalgamating it into a broad, courageous, balanced and tolerant vision with which she faced and enriched her world.

It is the simplest of Mrs. Ellis's books that proves the most symbolic: *The Lover's Calendar*, 1912, an excellently-planned anthology of love lyrics, one selection for every day in the year, suggesting the innumerable moods of the passion from virginal candor to the ecstatic absorption of the mystic. For it is to love that the life of Edith Ellis was consecrated, — that love which, in the words of Thoreau, "must be as much a light as a flame." It was to free love of its burdens that she worked in her own way for a world less encumbered by dead rules and false authorities. For her epitaph we may well repeat the line of the American anarchist. She was a light and a flame.

An Ellis Miscellany

INTRODUCTION

The material that makes up the following Miscellany appears now for the first time in print. Everything has been transcribed from the original manuscripts without change, except for the omission of the signatures to the individual poems. Where no titles are given, none are present in the manuscript. The initials D.O.R. and D.M.R. that occur at the head of certain entries in the Notes are today a mystery to Ellis himself, who has forgotten what they stood for.

POEMS

ORIGINAL AND TRANSLATED

(1875–1880)

Thou art to me, O my love,
As the sun to the earth,
And at thy look unnumbered joys
Spring into birth.

Thou art to me, O my love,
As the sky to the lark,
And in thy beauty I lose myself
From morn till dark.

I would I were a nightingale
And thou a beauteous rose,
Then might I the depths of my love
Fully disclose.

I would thou wert some starlike flower
And I a happy bee
Who in thy calyx' radiant nest
Ever might be.

For all one long long summer's day
I'd in thy bosom lie.
Until the sun sank in the west,
And stars grew in the sky.

22/2/75.

Westward the grey clouds draw
To the death of a golden day.
Mingles the light of stars and sun.
Now let us pray.

In this so shadowless light,
Passionate dawn of stars and night,
By the cold silent grace of day,
Pray we for light.

Light not of moon or stars;
We pray for no light of the sun;
We pray for that orb whose grand course
Is still to run

In the soul of man . . .
That he the clear and cloudless noon
Of . . .
May rise to soon.

Do naught but what accords
With science, Nature's brightest light,
And so may reach the paths of truth
From out this night.

As that fair form whose wings
Were made of fire and snow pure white
By Atlas' daughter from which was Hermaphrodite
(So passion and purity be blended in man)

CARCOAR, N. S. W.
July, 1876.

BARCAROLLE

(*From the Italian*)

"O Fisherboy, I pray thee bring
Thy bark this side the lake
In its waters I've lost my ring,"
Thus the fair lady spake.

"I'll give thee fifty crowns of gold,"
And on Como's blue breast
His little boat the fisher bold
Brought o'er at her behest.

"I will not take thy golden crowns," said he,
"But something I would take
You could give me if you choose, and, lady,
I'll search for thy sweet sake."

"O fisher, O fisher, now go,
And when the moon shines bright
Bring thou the ring, and stand below
My window's gleaming light."

In his quest did the youth succeed,
And when he came that night
There is no need to tell his labour's meed
What time the moon shone bright.

(About 1875)

BAUERNREGEL

(*From the German of Uhland*)

In summer seek a sweetheart out
In field or woodland wild;
For then the days are warm and long,
For then the nights are mild.

When winter comes, the gentle knot
You must right safely twine;
Full needless so to stay i' the snow
Beneath the cold moonshine.

GRAFTON, N. S. W.

Suggested by Vitorelli's *Serenata:* "Guarda che bianca luna."

There's not the fleeciest cloud
Moves in the silent sky;
The night is clear and still,
As God's angel, pure-browed,
Were passing by.

Nature lies in a dream:
No leaf stirs in the breeze;
So silent all things are,
Even the stars now seem
Their throbs to cease.

Only the nightingale's
Clear notes are borne along;
His music's passion-trills
Make all these distant vales
Instinct with song.

His love in some near tree
From twig to twig may fly,
With thy sweet scorn, my love,
Nor heed — but hark — 'tis she:
List her reply.

And now their twin notes through
The woods in concert meet:
Perchance if I a song
Like his could sing, thou, too,
Wouldst answer, sweet.

(Probably not later than 1875)

REVERIE

(*Written shortly after the lines* "De Profundis")[1]

Over the blue sky floating the clouds:
Lazily, lazily floating on high;
Mountain-like peaks, so snowy and lone,
Largely and whitely and richly strown
Over the warm and soft blue sky.

Green trees sleeping there in the sun:
Silently sleeping through the hot day:
Many-tinted and mystic there
As if those times they remembered ere
Knights of Faery passed away.

Joyously-ringing laughter of girls:
Flowers bright in the luminous air:
Glad song of birds that will not fail:
Blossoms of peach so delicate pale:
Loveliness, loveliness everywhere.

[1] See page 62.

Lying down with my head in the grass:
Lying under the tall gum-tree;
Letting the golden hours pass
As if there were naught in the wide world free,
Nothing on earth but what we see,
Nothing to do for thee or for me,
Only to rest and to feel and to be.

GRAFTON, N. S. W.
Oct. 1877.

BALLAD

Dreary and stark was the sedge,
Blossoms are faded from bough and wall,
A little ice at the river's edge,
And there is no fruit at all, at all.

A simple factory girl was she,
Blossoms are faded from bough and wall,
He loved her sweet face and honesty,
And there is no fruit at all, at all.

"Although on earth we may not wed,"
Blossoms are faded from bough and wall,
"Perhaps in Paradise," he said,
And there is no fruit at all, at all.

A stout and trusty cord he's ta'en,
Blossoms are faded from bough and wall,
He said, "In death we shall not be twain,"
And there is no fruit at all, at all.

Lip to lip, bosom to bosom he's bound,
Blossoms are faded from bough and wall,
Limb to limb for once inwound,
And there is no fruit at all, at all.

O the river is a cold bride-bed,
Blossoms are faded from bough and wall,
The stones a rough pillow for a girl's fair head,
And there is no fruit at all, at all.

In the spring of 1877 two bodies, tightly bound together by a strong cord, were found in the Seine at Rouen. They were those of a youth of twenty named Henri Dominois and a girl of eighteen named Eliza Dupré. He was the son of M. Dominois who occupied a good position in life, and she was a simple work-girl, pretty and honest. A letter found in the young man's pocket told their short story. "Our parents," it said, "would not allow us to marry, so we resolved to perish together, in order that we might not be separated in Paradise."

Sparkes Creek,
Scone, N. S. W.
2nd Oct. 1878.

The brook laughs softly and sings
The song of her glad heart's beat.
On the old stones outrings
The sound of her silver feet.

Above, a willow lays
His boughs upon her breast,
Leans down to him (her?) and prays
She stay with him and rest.

The brook laughs softly and sings,
  Leaps merrily down to the sea;
The willow his arms down flings
  For ever mournfully.

Junction Creek
Scone, N. S. W.
16 Oct. 1878.

LOVE'S AUTUMN-RHYME

1

Put in the sickle and reap;
  Love has come to the ear;
Gather the corn in a golden heap
  At the purple time of the year.
  Love is green and love is sere:
Gather the corn in a golden heap.

2

Ah! the merry harvest time,
  Spring is the time to sow;
And we sing together our autumn-rhyme
  When the corn has ceased to grow.
  Love, lord of the harvest will have it so.
And we sing together our harvest-rhyme.

14 Sept. 1879.

LINES

I wandered after fancy's will
  Among untrodden ways;
And Nature walked beside me still
  Through all my nights and days.

The moon that glided in bright trance,
  The broad sweet calm of hills,
The ever glad and gentle dance
  Of singing mountain-rills,

The skies that softer, larger seem,
  Strong gracious forms of trees,
Red joyous flowers in sudden gleam
  That beckoned through the breeze; —

She showed me these. I roamed amid
  That beauty glad and free,
Her large fair limbs the veil that hid
  She lift only for me.

I see her little now. My feet
  Tread only beaten ways;
I meet her not I used to meet,
  Who gladdened nights and days.

The joy that nestling by us lay
  Ah, Psyche! soon departs.
Yet something that must always stay
  It leaves beside our hearts.

30/3/80

A MEMORY

Torn clouds sweep fast across the moon,
  The wind is howling through the hills;
The pauses that the wind has made
  The tinkling of my Sparkes Creek fills.

The wind is moaning through the hills,
  I hear the curlew's mournful cry;
And I am here alone to see
  Those hills stand solemn priest-like by.

Far, far away the world moans too,
  Its burden of desire fulfils;
Men sorrow, love, are born and die:
  The wind is surging through the hills.

13/11/80

GEORGE ELIOT

Died 22 Dec. 1880

Strong spirit! through these realms of strife
  Thy light, thy thought, thy love are shed
  No more — nay rather this be said,
That death is dead and thine is life.

The life of life that never dies,
  And lives throughout the human years
  In all man's laughter, all his tears,
And all his growth to larger size.

And though a grief must take the heart
  From what is gone this Christmas Eve,
  For thee, for thee we will not grieve,
For all is well where now thou art.

26 Dec. 1880

TRANSLATIONS

FROM HEINE

(1877–1879)

In meiner Erinnerung erblühen

In memory are waking
The visions of long ago —
What is it in thy voice
Has power to move me so?

O do not say that you love me!
I know that earth's fairest things,
The time of love and the spring-time
Must quickly spread their wings.

O do not say that you love me!
Only kiss; leave the rest unsaid;
And smile when I show you tomorrow
The roses withered and dead.

Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam

A fir is standing lonely
Upon a northern height.
He sleeps, and like a garment,
The snow clings round him white.

He is dreaming of a palm-tree
Away in Eastern land,
Lonely and silent grieving
Amid the burning sand.

Du schönes Fischermädchen

You lovely fishermaiden,
Push off the boat from land,
And come and sit beside me,
And we'll chatter hand in hand.

Lay your small head on my bosom,
And do not fear so much;
Do you not trust you daily
Into the ocean's clutch?

My heart's just like the ocean,
Has storm and ebb and flow;
And many pearls full lovely
Are lying deep below.

Mein Herz, mein Herz ist traurig

My heart, my heart is weary,
Though May gleams o'er meadow and wold;
And I lean against the linden
Which stands on the bastion old.

Below, so blue and silent,
Floweth on the city moat;
And a boy is whistling gaily
As he angles from his boat.

On the other side beyond it,
  In miniature clearly seen,
  Are houses and men and gardens
  And cattle and meadows green.

The maidens are bleaching the liner,
  And dancing mid the hay;
  I hear the distant humming
  Of the mill-wheel far away.

In front of the old gray tower
  Which stands beside the town,
  The sentinel red-coated
  Is pacing up and down.

He is playing with his musket;
  It flashes in sunshine red;
  And then he presents and shoulders —
  I would that he shot me dead.

Mit schwarzen Segeln segelt mein Schiff

With sails of black my ship sails on
  Far over the stormy sea;
Thou knowest that my soul with grief
  Is laden heavily.

Thy heart as faithless as the wind,
  Turns as inconstantly,
With sails of black my ship sails on
  Far over the stormy sea.

Ich bin die Prinzessin Ilse

I am the Princess Ilse,
I dwell in Ilsenstein;
To my castle come and we'll take
Our fill of joys divine.

With crystalline well-water
I'll bathe thy troubled head;
Thou shalt forget thy sorrows,
Oh thou care-weariéd!

Upon my white fair bosom,
In my arms so fair and white
There shalt thou be and dream on
Old legend-told delight.

And I'll kiss thee and caress thee,
As of old I kissed and caressed
My noble Kaiser Heinrich,
Who now is in his rest.

The living only are living,
And the dead are forever dead.
And I am fair and glowing,
My heart's blood runs so red.

Come down below where my castle
Is ringing with song and shout.
The knights and the maidens are dancing,
And there's joy 'mong the vassal-rout.

There's rustling of silken slippers,
And clanging of spurs of steel,
There are kettledrums and fiddles,
And horns and trumpet-peal.

And round thee shall my arms be claspéd,
As of old Kaiser Heinrich round;
I held him to my bosom
When I heard the trumpet-sound.

Das gelbe Laub erzittert

The yellow foliage trembles,
The leaves are fast falling beneath, —
Ah, all that is fair and lovely
So fades and sinks in death.

A painful-sweet glimmer of sunshine
On the top of the forest gleams;
The farewell sweet parting-kisses
Of the summer-time it seems.

I feel that I should be weeping
From the deepest depths of my heart;
The sight brings back to memory
That hour made us to part.

Need was that I should leave you,
And that you would die I knew!
I was the parting summer,
The dying forest you.

Ich lieb' eine Blume, doch weiss nicht welche

I love a flower, I know not which;
And there's the smart.
I look in all the flower cups
And seek a heart.

The flowers are sweet in the evening light,
Sings the nightingale.
I seek a heart as fair as mine,
As passion-pale.

The nightingale sings, and I understand
Her lovely moan;
We both of us feel so lone and sad,
So sad and lone.

NOTES

WRITTEN AT SCONE, NEW SOUTH WALES

Dated July, 1878 but not begun until November, 1878

D.O.R.

The Hebraic Element in Swinburne

Swinburne is perhaps the only great atheistic poet whose atheism is of a positive and not a merely negative character. Only a very strong root of poetry can flourish in other than theistic or pantheistic soil. Generally an active atheism implies a shallow emotional capacity. It is not certainly so with Swinburne. Bearing this in mind, it is remarkable that, more than any poet, Swinburne should have caught the imaginative spirit of the Hebrew prophets. R. H. Hutton says that the Hebrew poets looked at the world from a heliocentric in contradistinction to a geocentric standpoint. The geocentric way of looking at Nature is to be found (*e.g.*) in Tennyson. Tennyson is never happier than in the minute and loving description of Nature, and he is never more a poet. When Swinburne attempts minute description of Nature he is rarely successful. His impressions are coloured so strongly by his vivid and powerful imagination that the result is exaggerated, and sometimes almost grotesque, as is the case with Victor Hugo. Like the Hebrew poets (and in the genius of no nation, save the English, has the imagination been so powerful and predominating on elements as in the Hebrew genius) he seized on the large and elemental aspects of nature, which by their massiveness or turbulence, lend them-

selves most readily to the excited activity of a powerful imagination. Swinburne is constantly using Hebrew metaphors and Hebrew forms of speech, and his thoughts constantly run into a Hebrew mould. Many of his shorter poems are conceived entirely in the Hebrew spirit. Anyone who has carefully read the first series of "Poems and Ballads" and the "Songs before Sunrise" can recall instances. There is a striking and by no means fanciful resemblance between Swinburne and Ezekiel. In a point that I have not mentioned there is a resemblance between these two poets. Ezekiel, also, had grasped that grand imaginative side of unbounded lust as manifested in women of which Swinburne in his first series of "Poems and Ballads" shows so strong a perception. In "Aholibah" he even attempts a paraphrase of a passage in Ezekiel; but he is not successful. He fails to catch the intensity and moral earnestness of the original, and he forgets, too, that Ezekiel, also, was a poet, and that poetry may not be paraphrased.

Junction Creek
4/10/78

Swinburne and the Sea

No poet, to my knowledge, has ever spoken of the sea as Swinburne has. Many beautiful and loving things have been said about it. But its splendour, its various magnificence, the depth and fulness of its life, the maenadic intoxication of its freedom, — only Swinburne has given expression adequate to these. Love is the condition of right seeing, here as always, but the audacious, the almost fiercely, passionate quality of Swinburne's imagination (his "Masque of Queen Bersabe" illustrates what I mean) stands him here in good stead. Shakespeare was a thorough landsman; the sea had but a small place in his heart, though he has spoken admirably of it in "Pericles." Only Heine has grasped the glory and loveliness of the sea in any degree approximate to Swinburne, "Ich liebe das Meer wie eine

Geliebte," Heine says somewhere; there is something almost filial in Swinburne's love. My own love for the sea and all its manifestations makes these two poets dear to me.

[Then follows a quotation from each poet:

"Not Earth's for spring and fall" etc., and
"Das Meer erstrahlt im Sonnenschein," etc.]

4/10/78

D.O.R.

Life (suggested by a rosebud)

A very ignorant old woman I knew once was asked if a certain young lady she knew was pretty. She was unable to answer the question; it had no meaning for her; it was a subject on which she did not pretend to be able to give an opinion. This would seem to indicate that the sense of beauty is one of late growth, and that it does not exist in a low state of culture. But, on the other hand, the law of natural selection shows that, in the earlier links of the chain of life, beauty by no means goes for nothing; that among birds, for instance (to go much lower in the scale of creation than the old woman) the gay plumage of the male bird is an attraction to the female. What is the explanation of these apparently discordant facts? I believe that it is this: *Life is the effort of Nature to attain self-consciousness.* Beauty is Nature's one all-embracing law, or a blind impulse, unknown, unknowing. What then is the secret of this movement upward, through so much pain, so much sorrow, this effort for ever failing and yet for ever successful, this ascension through mollusk, and beast, and man, that we call life — what is it but the working out of a hidden yearning at the heart of Nature to become self-conscious? And this great sea of life, the bosom of our Mother Nature, sending out ripples of loveliness all around in the wantoness of her joyous heart; and still never forgetting that yearning hidden beneath — are not we borne

upon its foremost waves? And all this life of man that we call so *un*natural, the law of which is sorrow, sorrow for ever clasping a secret joy in its midmost heart, what is it but our Mother slowly, painfully showing to us all the beauty and glory of her — we wayward children? So that the loveliness I see is not the gleam of my own eyes; it is indeed thine, O Mother. Thy unknowingness is greater than our knowing, and of all life, most of all the higher life, is the only law sorrow; on that condition alone any life or joy or knowing possible. And shall it not in the end with life be well? — And in any case well,

"as a child,
Whose song-bird seeks the wood for evermore
Is sung to in its stead by mother's mouth,
Till sinking on her breast love reconciléd
He sleeps the faster that he wept before."

Sparkes Creek
6/10/78

D.O.R. *Genius*

If one may speak of analyzing so divine a thing, I should say that in its ultimate analysis genius is *sensibility*, a great capacity for seeing or feeling; or, to take a more comprehensive word, genius is *receptivity*. Of course this definition will not account for the forms in which genius manifests itself. But I think that the creative, coördinating element which always attends the highest genius comes afterwards, is the result of discipline, not part of the essence of genius. In its essence genius is capacity for seeing or feeling. The man of genius is only such because he feels or sees what other men do not feel or see. He is a Memnon for all the sorrow and loveliness of the world to smite on and pass into music.

Junction Creek
10/10/78

D.O.R.

Shakespeare and Goethe

Half the disputes in the world would cease if men would begin by defining the words they use. Goethe was a greater poet than Shakespeare, say some. Shakespeare was undoubtedly the greater, say others. Yes, but what do you include in that word poet? In Tennyson, for instance, I see many predominant elements which are not those of a poet. He is essentially an artist. R. H. Hutton rightly says that Tennyson was an artist before he was a poet; he might have added that he is still an artist after he has ceased to be a poet.[1] There is also in Tennyson a very powerful moral element. In all his works, too, there is an element of sympathy for all the foremost social and religious movements of the day. Here, therefore, are three prominent elements in the genius of Tennyson quite distinct from the poetic; and, moreover, the poetic element is always subordinate to the artistic and moral elements. If we turn to Swinburne we shall find very little of the sympathetic element, still less of the moral, and we shall never find the artistic predominating over the poetic. To compare, therefore, Tennyson and Swinburne as poets, we must place on one side the artistic, moral and sympathetic elements and when we have done so I find Swinburne a greater poet than Tennyson. But if we take Tennyson in his totality, I consider his genius is incomparably greater than Swinburne's. He is more than a poet; he is a teacher. To apply the same method to this dispute about the relative greatness of Shakespeare and Goethe, about which the disputants on both sides are so positive. To ascertain who was the greater poet we must first place on one side all these elements in either other than poetic, or which, at least, are not subordinate to the poetic. Shakespeare beyond question was a great artist; not in that sense in which Hutton speaks of Tennyson as being an artist before

[1] This was written some fifteen years before Tennyson's death.

he was a poet, but in the higher sense of the word certainly a profound artist. I can find, however, no distinctively artistic *element* in Shakespeare. I should say that it is the tendency of the poetic element in him to be artistic; one feels inclined almost to say that it was an unconscious tendency. A moral element we certainly find in Shakespeare. Matthew Arnold says that it tends to become predominant. In his best work I think not. But a distinction must be drawn between a moral work and one written for a definite moral purpose. A book with a moral purpose is *ipso facto* outside the domains of art. But all the highest works of art are, I think, essentially and inevitably moral. Emerson says "I find the antique sculpture as ethical as Marcus Antoninus," and *Macbeth* and *Lear* are also essentially moral. I would say that all the highest work of art exists under certain moral laws, just as life exists under conditions of gravitation and chemical affinity. The sanctity of honour, life, chastity; and a great Nemesis put in action by him who violates these laws, and which at last overwhelms him — these are the conditions of art. Honour, life, chastity, they only possess an ideal value, but remove them — if you can — and all the art of the world falls to pieces at once. I bring this forward to show that the morality of Shakespeare is not a distinct element of his genius, but simply the condition of its action. We have, therefore, no deductions to make from Shakespeare; he was primarily, solely, a poet. Now turn to Goethe. What first strikes us in the genius of Goethe, is how everything is subordinate to *self-culture;* how he is himself the end of all his works and stands superior to them. We observe also his many-sidedness; that poetry is only one of the divisions of his mind; and we see, moreover, how often his poetry is art only, and not poetry at all, as is the case sometimes with Tennyson, whose "Idylls of the King," for instance, are moral, harmonious, artistic, possess in fact every good quality — except poetry. Bearing this in mind, I say without hesitation that Shakespeare

was a greater poet than Goethe. But if we take Goethe in his totality, if we remember the extent and depth of his mind, his many-sidedness, his insight, and his vast significance for us as a teacher, remembering this I would say with little hesitation that Goethe was a greater genius than Shakespeare.

Junction Creek
10/10/78

D.O.R.

Goethe and Heine

It is usual to look upon Goethe as eminently a lyric poet, to consider him, in fact, as standing supreme among lyric poets. Strauss, for instance (in an appendix to "Old Faith and New"), maintains this opinion. He calls Goethe the greatest lyric poet of all time, and says that his poems are so elevated to the summit of the ideal and typical, that, divested of the weight of earth, they float around us like genii of the purest æther. Now, though this simile looks rather fanciful, it does in reality accurately express the effect produced by Goethe's best lyrics, and the same might be said of Shakespeare. Take, for instance, Mariana's song:—

"Take, o! take those lips away" etc.

and Goethe's "Sehnsucht":—

"Nur wer die Sehnsucht Kennt," etc.

They float past us like strains of music borne upon the breath of a breeze to die away in the distance. I feel the loveliness of these songs of Goethe's, and I have coupled Shakespeare with him. Till recently, indeed, I was inclined to agree with the opinion that pronounces Goethe supreme among lyric poets. But these Ariel-voices, exquisite as they are, are they really the supreme lyric expression? Matthew Arnold well speaks of the

"lyric *cry*," and I think that the profoundist lyric is, above all, a cry, the cry of a human soul. Catullus, Burns, Shelley, I know no greater lyric poets than these, and I find that they are, above all, not singers, not artists, but men and human souls — souls whose songs have been crushed out of them in the wine-press of human life, and when I read them

> "in my eyes and in my ears
> Are music and the wine of tears,
> And light and thunder of the tides."

This is what the supreme lyric poet is and this is what Goethe is assuredly not. And indeed the very excellence of Goethe lies in this, that he is not subject to his inspiration, but that his inspiration is subject to him, that he knows how to subordinate his emotions. That is his greatness, but certainly it is not the greatness of a lyric poet. His songs are like sweet memories, with a far-away music in them. They never reach my soul. "Ach, wer bringt die schöne Tage," etc. What has this calm-eyed self-possessed being in common with Catullus and Burns and Shelley? It is the upward yearning of a human soul, for ever going wrong and for ever striving to go right, and therefore human, and therefore to everyone the voice of his own soul — that is what I seek. And this is what I find in Heine. He is no Goethe, no demigod. Indeed a man, "cradled into poetry by wrong." The cries of a soul very grievously crushed in life's wine-press by the feet of sorrow and error and sin. And, therefore, — yes, therefore, — so full of divine meaning, of sweetness, of infinite pathos, so full, to him whose own soul teaches him to see it, of love. This man truly is the brother of Sappho and Catullus and Villon, and Burns and Shelley and De Musset and Leopardi, youngest born among these glorious ones, not assuredly least.

Junction Creek
11/10/78

D.O.R.

The Hebrew Genius

It is usual to speak of the genius of the Hebrew nation as essentially stern, narrow, intolerant. I wonder at this. One would think that the fact of the existence of the Jew Jesus Christ would have been a standing protest against such an estimation. For I suppose that that large body of persons who call themselves Christians would, if they took the trouble to think about it, come to the conclusion that there must have been some reason for Christ having been born a Jew rather than a Greek or Roman or Goth, that this was not the result of Divine caprice. The more I read the Old Testament the more traces I see of that spirit of love, mercy, sweetness, tenderness, which came to so glorious flame in Christ of which we find no traces among Greeks or Romans. It is as unjust to speak of the Hebrew spirit as mainly stern, narrow, intolerant, as it is to say that the spirit of the nation which produced Chaucer and Shakespeare is merely Puritanic. David the Psalmist, Isaiah, "Job," "Song of Songs," Ruth, Ezekiel, Hosea, Philo, Christ, Paul, the Talmud (in which perhaps we find most of the Spirit of Christ), Maimonides, Spinoza, Heine — these were the men, these were the products, of a nation essentially stern, narrow, and intolerant!

Junction Creek
17/10/78

D.O.R.

A Tendency in Heredity.

The following law — or rather tendency — in heredity attracted my attention more than a year ago, and I have never seen it mentioned in any book where it might have been expected to be found. It may however be, after all, a well-known fact, like many other discoveries with which I have

credited myself. The tendency I refer to is this: the sexual element tends to predominate in the elder members of a family, and to be latent in the younger members. I said this was not a law. It simply amounts to this: when a large sensual element predominates in the character it will be among the elder children; and that when the sensual element is smallest it will be among the younger members of the family. To take a striking instance: Goethe, in whom more perhaps than any other equally great poet the sensual element predominated, was an eldest born; Wordsworth, in whom more perhaps than in any other poet the sensual element was absent, was the seventh son. I think anyone from his own personal observations can verify this tendency. Bearing in mind the well-known influence of the condition of the parents at the time of conception on the offspring, the physiological explanation of this tendency in heredity is not difficult to conceive. It is interesting to consider it in some of its relations. For instance, according to orthodox ideas on the subject, an eldest born child, other things being equal, has a larger chance of eternal damnation than a younger.

Junction Creek
17/10/78

D.O.R.

God

We know of no such thing as matter, a distinct entity apart from force. The universe is force. Take any object, an orange, for instance. The sensitive retina of our eyes receives a certain impression of form and colour, that is to say a certain force is exerted upon them. An impression, also, which we call flavour is exerted upon our sensitive palates; and when we touch it we experience a certain force which we call resistance. The aggregate of the forces which produce in us these sensations we call an orange. It may be said, perhaps, that it is the orange

which exerts these forces upon us. But to say that we must set out with the assumption of the existence of the orange, whereas we know nothing of it except what our sensations tell us, and all these, when we analyse them, have to tell us, is that they are sensitive to certain forces, the aggregate of which we call an orange. In thus denying the existence of matter it is not for a moment denied that the external world exists. It is simply affirmed that the external world is a living active force, and not dead matter which emits force. Of course we may, if we like, *assume* the existence of matter as a substratum underlying force and which emits it. But observe this: It is just as hard to conceive how matter should emit force as it is to conceive how force should act upon us by itself. And *entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitatum.*

So far I have been merely repeating the result obtained by modern psychologists. But see what a flood of light this throws upon the thoughts of men. See how, for 2000 years and more, men have been fighting against "matter." They knew, they felt that there was a spiritual world, and they ever strove to attain it, or dreamed of it as far away, treading under their feet, so far as they could, what they thought was a base, dead, material world. And now, lo! this world of dead matter is revealed to us as a world full of infinite life, with no touch of matter or death, full of glory and loveliness and meaning, as in truth the spiritual, the divine world for which we prayed.

And see how the thoughts of men are justified. They knew — Spinoza, for instance — that they had only to assume God in the world and at once all things became glorious to them, and full of meaning, although to them it was only an assumption. And now they are justified.

And what has revealed this to us? Science. Science, that we received with so lukewarm a greeting. Science that we thought was about to take from us all that was good and beautiful, — science has shewn us *this*.

The paths of truth are many, and they seem to us sometimes to be very intricate mazes, and to lead no man knows whither. But — if we must needs find a metaphor for it — I think of truth as of some vast pyramidal polyhedron. Many and steep are its sides, and we only see that on which we are ourselves, but they all converge to the same apex, and sooner or later we attain the apex — and that apex is God.

Sparkes Creek
19/10/78

D.O.R.

Hosea

The minor prophets are full of genius. None more so than Hosea. The second chapter is a beautiful example of the subtle mingling of sternness and tenderness — the tenderness so far exceeding that sternness — which is characteristic of the Hebrew spirit. The transition at the fourteenth verse is so full of pathos with its "therefore." It almost recalls Heine.

Hosea came probably from the northern part of Palestine, so much more productive in poetry, and whence we have the "Song of Songs." One gathers that he was sensitive to the charm of women. We smile, too, at the frequency with which the Lord commands him to form a *liaison* with a lady of the *demi-monde*, and at the naïve way in which our sweet gentle Hosea tells us how many homers of barley he got her for.

Sparkes Creek
19/10/78

D.O.R.

Shakespeare's Third and Fourth Periods

The transition from the second to the third period is very gradual. "All's well that ends well" and "Julius Ceasar"

lie on the borderland. I consider the following to be as near as possible the chronological order of the third period plays: "Hamlet," "Measure for Measure," "Othello," "Lear," "Macbeth," "Anthony and Cleopatra," "Coriolanus," "Troilus and Cressida" (or perhaps after "Measure for Measure"), "Timon." The women of the first, second and third periods have much in common. The women of the fourth period stand quite apart. They are all marked by the absence of what I would call sweet earthliness. Sweetness they may have and too much of it, abundance of earthliness some of them, but none of them that combination of the two which we find in Rosalind and Viola and Imogen. Here they are: Ophelia, Isabella, Desdemona, Regan, Goneril, Cordelia, Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra, Volumnia, Virgilia, Cressida. It is as if one were reading Dante.

The transition from the third to the fourth period is of startling suddenness. "Troilus and Cressida" is as incomprehensible as it is wonderful. Shakespeare seems to be pouring out all the wealth of his genius in mockery. The atmosphere of "Timon" is almost unbearable. Then is an interval of little more than a year away from the keen irony of the "Troilus," the fierce satire of "Timon," and we are in the country air of Stratford in "Pericles" and "Cymbeline" and "Winter's Tale," breathing the fragrance of flowers, looking at life with the calm far-away gaze of old age. I can't recall any more wonderful transition in literature. Shakespeare was long in attaining his maturity. He was about thirty when he reached the manhood of his genius. But half a lifetime is pressed together in the brief six years of the third period. When he wrote the "Tempest" he was old — older at 45 almost than Goethe was at 80. He takes an old man's joy in the freshness of young boyhood and girlhood, in the beauty of flowers and sunny air and peace, in the loveliness of repentance and forgiveness and reconciliation. Not that there is any trace of decay in Shakespeare's

later work. He turned to the sweet Italian tales which had charmed him in youth, and touched him with a light playful touch, yet full of strength and tenderness and truth. "Cymbeline" is a lovely play. It was Hazlitt's favourite and he has criticised it admirably in his "Characters." I always look upon Imogen as the noblest, sweetest ideal of womanhood in Shakespeare, — the woman in whom the elements of character are held in most perfect equilibrium, with indeed a certain touch of gravity that faintly recalls the third period, and yet with all the sweet earthliness of Rosalind and Viola. The "Tempest" and the "Winter's Tale" are scarcely less lovely plays.

Sparkes Creek
20/10/78

D.M.R.

The Conventional Theory of Sin

Our way of looking at the errors of a "good" man is, I think, very perniciously wrong. It is something like this. We imagine two roads leading in opposite directions, one the path of virtue, and the other the path of vice. We see, as we fancy, a good man marching bravely in the narrow way of virtue, and we exultingly count the milestones which he passes. Some fine morning we wake up to find our good man lying in a ditch ever so far back in the broad way that leadeth, etc. This surprises and shocks us, and we naturally come to the conclusion that he couldn't have gone back all that way in so short a time, and that he must therefore have been in the path of vice all the time, and that it was merely the phantasm of him that we saw on the path of virtue; in short, that he was a hypocrite. Now this is very often an altogether false conclusion. Our metaphor is false and we must sweep it away. *The man who has the greatest capacity for being better than other men is the man who*

has the greatest capacity for being worse than other men. Goodness is power, a manifestation of force. A truly good man is a man of greater power than other men, and the law of the transformation of force holds good in the moral as in the physical world. And force is genius, is sensibility. Goodness is genius. And let us beware of looking upon genius as an excuse for sin. There is no need to excuse the sins of genius. The man of genius feels a far keener sense of his own errors, a far more bitter remorse, than another man. See the Psalms of David, and again in the Sonnets of our own Shakespeare (Shakespeare's Psalms as Mr. Furnivall calls them), how the same tone of remorse came out for the same adulterous stain on his life — at a period, too, when, as Mr. Furnivall says, with a little exaggeration, adultery was as common as handshaking is now. But the majority of people, having not this capacity for great goodness and great badness, fail to see this, — unfortunately for themselves, as it leads them to imagine goodness a delusion, and still more unfortunately for the victims of their misconception.

Sparkes Creek
24/10/78

D.M.R.

James Hinton

I look upon Hinton as decidedly one of the most original thinkers of this century. His great merit is that he is at the same time a scientific and a religious thinker — and that is a very rare combination indeed. He does not strive to weld together these two elements of science and religion, nor does he merely strive to show, as most people are contented to do, that there is in reality no conflict between them. It is peculiar to his thinking that it is spiritual *because* it is scientific; he has found religion through science. The way in which he reconciles the

"moral reason," as he calls it, with the intellect is, I think, the only possible solution of the problem in the present state of thought. As I understand it, it is something like this. The only world positively known to the Greeks was the sensible world, the world revealed by their senses. They also felt that there was a world of intellect, an intelligible world. But they never found out that the intelligible world had any connection with the sensible world, and the best men among them, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Parmenides, etc., dreamed of it as far away, and let their imaginations run riot among cosmogonical fancies. It was this that induced Socrates to confine himself to the study of ethics as the only knowledge attainable by man. But all this time the human mind was being trained, trained upon Nature, with what glorious results in art we know; trained in accuracy by the growth of the science of mathematics. This process was continued through the Middle Ages in those disputes of Scholasticism which seem to us so useless; and, bye and bye, Copernicus, the first Bacon, Giordono Bruno, arose to show how, in reality, the intelligent world was founded on the sensible world, instead of being a far-away fanciful world; or, as we say, to introduce the inductive method. Now, says Hinton, let us apply this to the relation between the intelligible or intellectual world and the spiritual or moral world. Hitherto we have been doing with the spiritual world precisely what the Greeks did with the world of intellect, imagining it as something far away and having no foundation on the intellectual world at all. But all this time the moral reason has been trained; trained by the poets since Shakespeare, and by the great modern schools of music, just as with the Greeks and Schoolmen the intellect was being trained. This is a very imperfect attempt to suggest rather than to express this idea in a few words. Hinton not merely gladly accepts all the conclusions of modern science, but it is because he accepts them that he is able to see how the spiritual world has,

and must have, its only real basis on the world of science or intellect; and perhaps no one who is not well acquainted with the results of modern science can understand what harmony and glory are thrown on the universe and on the human consciousness by this conception of Hinton's. For my own part, it has introduced a new element into my whole way of regarding things, and though I am quite unable to accept many of Hinton's favourite ideas, in many ways his thoughts have been of incalculable service to me.

Junction Creek
31/10/78

Good and Evil

Many Broad Church divines are fond of insisting on what they consider the fundamental and eternal distinction between good and evil. Maurice says ("Theological Essays," p. 44): "God has an antagonist" — "a spirit directly and absolutely opposed to the Father of Lights" — and is anxious to show that God has no complicity with evil. It is strange that he should have been unable to see that the supposition that God is not the direct cause of evil in no way removes this difficulty. If I stand by and see a murder committed when a word from me would have prevented it, am I so much less guilty than the murderer? Maurice surely did not believe that God is impotent to remove evil. And if not, then I see but one conclusion possible. Some time since I was inclined to hold with the Broad Church on this point, that the source — whatever it is — of evil must be other than God, that there can be nothing in common between good and evil; and I held with J. S. Mill that if we are to have a theistic theory of the universe, the only way to account for the facts is to suppose a principle of evil as well as a principle of good, and that the former possesses a power which the latter is unable entirely to overcome. Perhaps I was only playing with

theories then. I have gained a profounder consciousness of God now, and I can see that to suppose a great active living principle in the universe which God is unable to control is to annihilate God. Either all things that live do indeed live in him, or God is a finite, limited impotent being whose existence is inconceivable, or not worth conceiving.

Without evil there can be no good. We are like the beasts when we are without the consciousness of evil. All the goodness in the world is moulded out of evil, and the best men are those who are the most conscious of evil. Good without evil is as inconceivable as light without darkness. And good and evil are in perpetual flux; good for ever tending to become evil, evil for ever merging into good. All that has ever been worthy and noble in man has had its origin, not in the consciousness of good, not in the consciousness of evil, but in the consciousness of the conflict between the two.

Perhaps these statements may seem to contradict each other. The world is full of apparent contradictions, and every highest truth is the union of opposites. For there *is* a conflict between good and evil; and evil *is* for ever hateful, and inevitably must be so. And if anyone thinks it necessary to believe, as the correlative metaphysical fact, that the universe is a battlefield for two antagonistic spirits of good and evil, I have nothing to say. For let us be very certain that the only right belief for every man is that which his own consciousness tells him is true, although our consciousness tells us something different. And if therefore, while a man profoundly feels that evil is altogether evil he is unable to conceive that evil is also good; if the consciousness of the latter truth would annihilate for him the consciousness of the former truth; if he is not content to say with Paul that sin is simply death, absence of life, as darkness is absence of light, by all means let him hold that "God has an antagonist" — "a spirit directly and absolutely opposed to the Father of Lights." But, for my part, I will never believe this.

It is, indeed, *Thy* world in which I live, O God! I know that the foul dream of evil is false; I know that it is false, and therefore I have strength to look upon the face of life, the marred and bleeding face of life, and therefore I strive to be among those who seek to pour into its wounds the oil and the wine; — that wonderful face of life, which has fascinated me with the terror and the loveliness of it, because I know that it is indeed *Thy* face.

Sparkes Creek
1/11/78

THE SONG OF SONGS

As a Drama, by Ernest Renan

Translated, with an Introduction by H. H. Ellis

(1878)

Introduction

"The *Song of Songs*," observes M. Renan, "is perhaps the most curious of the remains of antiquity." For the last hundred years it has attracted much of the attention of critics, and most of the many difficulties it presents are resolved. The form in which it is given by M. Renan will seem to many persons in the highest degree arbitrary. A glance at his method of interpretation will prove the incorrectness of this assumption. No portion of the arrangement of the poem, however apparently insignificant, is arbitrary, and, as it now appears, it is, the same critic remarks, "the result of the work of several generations of faithful interpreters."

The *Song of Songs* can scarcely be regarded as a drama meant to be acted. It is highly improbable that the Jews had theatrical representations of a public nature. On the other hand it is difficult to understand the *Song of Songs* if we look on it as merely intended to be read. The dryness and detached nature of many passages seem clearly to denote a *libretto* destined to be completed by action and music. It seems therefore probable that it was intended for representation though not of a public nature. In all likelihood it was one of those plays which it was customary for the young people of the village to act at weddings. And the researches of modern critics have rendered highly probable

the theory originated by Bossuet and Lowth, that it was cut up into days corresponding with the days of the marriage feast. Everything that we know of the wedding feasts of the Jews accords with this hypothesis. Marriage among the Hebrews was not accompanied by a religious ceremony. It was celebrated in the family, or rather in the village, with songs, dances, feasts, torchlight processions, and choral music. At Damietta, and in certain parts of Syria such plays are still acted. They last seven days, during which the bride appears each time in a different costume. These games pass in the harem; the guests, as in the *Song of Songs*, form the chorus.

In regard to the age of the *Song of Songs*, M. Renan refuses to agree with those critics who place it after the Captivity. He thinks with Ewald, Hitzig, and others, that it was written not long after the death of Solomon; that is to say, a short time after the schism in the middle of the tenth century before Christ. "That," he says, "was one of the epochs of greatest freedom in the history of the Hebrew genius. No great prophet appeared at that time to impose his spirit on the nation; the religious institutions had not the rigour which they attained later; the royal line in Jerusalem timidly continued the pomp and ostentation inaugurated by Solomon; but the old republican spirit was still alive in the North, and was soon to burst out at the appearance of the most seditious of the prophets, the demagogue Elijah. This is the historical medium, in the midst of which, in our opinion, the author of the *Song of Songs* lived. Enough has been said to show that we admit as very probable the hypothesis proposed by Ewald and Hitzig, according to which our poem was composed in the North. It is easy to understand how a poet of the kingdom of Israel should have put the little capital of Tirzah in the same rank as Jerusalem; it is difficult to understand how a Jerusalemite should have done so. That antipathy against the harem of Solomon, composed of 'daughters of Jerusalem,' is also a trait which can only belong to the North.

The style carries us towards the neighbouring regions of Syria. Lastly, the points of contact which Hitzig has established between our author and Hosea, who, as we know, was a writer of the North (8th century before Christ) if they do not conclusively prove that the prophet had read the *Song of Songs*, prove, at all events, that the two writers lived within the same circle of images and that the same expressions were familiar to them.[1] One feels on their work, if I may venture to say so, the impression of the green and fresh nature of the North. 'Northern Palestine,' M. Reville has very well said, 'appears in the history of the Israelites less accessible to religious spiritualism, less inclined to reaction against nature and a natural life than Southern Palestine. Also it is there that the history of the people seems to have had greatest scope. It is from them that we have the patriotic song of Deborah, the apologue of Jotham (*Judges* ch. 9, vv. 5–20), the histories of Gideon, of Jephtha, of Samson, in which the poetic element holds so large a place; the prophecies of Hosea, so strongly coloured; the prophets who have not written, but whose history attests their powerful influence on the popular imagination, Elijah and Elisha, the legend of Jonah, etc. . . . Let us add that the beauty of Nature in this country of Lebanon, an agricultural country of marvellous fertility, rich in woods, in meadows, in running water, was better fitted to inspire pastoral poetry than the sandy and rather rocky districts of the South.' Let us add also, M. Renan continues, "that with the exception of Engaddi, Jerusalem, and Heshbon, all the localities mentioned in the poem, Sharon, Galaad, Tirzah, Lebanon, Amana, Hermon, Shenir, Carmel, Baalhamon, Shulem, the heroine's native-place, belong to the northern Kingdom."

It is scarcely necessary to observe that M. Renan can find no

[1] This consideration is of special weight if we consider that the very ancient poets are always marked by a certain poverty of expression and make no effort to attain variety.

mystical intention on the part of the writer of the *Song of Songs*. "Nothing was ever so far removed from mysticism as the Hebrew spirit, the Arab spirit, and the Semitic spirit in general. The idea of bringing the Creator in relation with the creature, the supposition that they could be amorous of one another, and the ten thousand refinements of this kind in which Hindoo and Christian mysticism have indulged, are at the antipodes of the severe conception of the Semitic God. Such ideas would have passed for blasphemies in Israel." It was about the first century before, or the first century after Christ that the allegorical exegesis commenced. We see how powerful the allegorical spirit then was in the writings of Philo, the Evangelists, St. Paul, and in the Talmud. The same method of exegesis had for a long time been current among the Greeks in regard to Homer. Those who argue the mystical nature of the *Song of Songs* from its acceptance as sacred by the Jews must remember that, even supposing that it was not at first accepted in its natural sense, 800 or 900 years elapsed between its production and its reception into the Jewish canon. We must not therefore infer the intention of the writer from the canonical nature of the book. The book of *Ruth* has received as complete an allegorical interpretation as the *Song of Songs*, and the partisans of tradition, to be logical, should equally accept the mystic nature of the former. *Ecclesiastes* was included in the Jewish canon; and it must be remembered that, in the words of M. Renan, "the idea of a strictly limited canon, and of an inspiration extending uniformly to all the books contained in that canon, is a Christian, and not a Jewish idea."

It was at the formation of the great exegetic school of Germany at the end of the last century that the conditions for the right understanding of the *Song of Songs* were first established. Voices had previously been raised in favour of the natural sense of the poem, notably by Theodore of Mopsuestia (died 429). Castalion (in 1544) supported the same view. He went fur-

ther. He considered the poem of an improper nature, and thought that it should be removed from the canon. This opinion long exercised a mischievous influence on the interpretation of the poem. It was Jacobi, who, in 1771, first removed this objection by showing the real nature of the *Song of Songs*. He established the fundamental point that Solomon is not the hero of the poem, that the heroine is a shepherdess carried to the court to satisfy the criminal desires of the King; and that, so far from containing improper ideas, the poem was, in the thought of the author, altogether moral. From that time the rôle of the shepherd began to be disengaged. The works on the subject published by Umbreit, Hitzig, Ewald, and Renan have now perfectly established the real nature of the poem, and their views have been almost universally accepted by critics. M. Renan remarks that "this opinion has become, in some sort, classical in Germany, Holland, and England." Among English critics in the last century Lowth was the first to acknowledge a natural sense in the *Song of Songs*.

To conclude I will transfer the last pages of M. Renan's very interesting *Etude*. "The poem is neither mystic, as the theologians deemed, nor improper as Castalion thought, nor purely exotic as Herder considered; it is moral; it is resumed in one verse, the 7th of the 8th chapter, the last of the poem:—

'Nothing can resist sincere love; when the rich man wishes to buy love, he only buys shame.' The object of the poem is not the voluptuous passion which languishes in the seraglios of the degenerate East, nor the equivocal sentiment of the Hindoo or Persian quietist, hiding its hypocritical indolence beneath a lying exterior, but true love, the love which inspires courage and sacrifice, preferring poverty in freedom to slavery in opulence, breaking out in a vigorous hatred of all that is lying or base, and ending in calm happiness and fidelity.

"Thus must be resolved, in the eyes of the theologian and the critic, the difficulties raised by the book which occupies us. Even

in the eyes of the critic it would appear strange that in the midst of this literature which has become one of the foundations of the faith of humanity, among the remains of this Hebraic thought always grave and reserved, in the number of those venerated writings which have survived the epurations of so many pious scribes, an equivocal book should figure, a poem consecrated unreservedly to sensual love. Such is not the *Song of Songs*. It is not to the purely erotic poems of India, such as those of Amaron and Bhertrihari, nor to the poetry of Hafiz, nor to the *Maonals* of the Arabs that our poem must be compared. The *Song of Songs* is a secular book, but it is not a frivolous book. The traits of detail which excite our levity, too prone to smile, are such as are found in all ancient poetry. Voltaire was wrong to amuse himself at its expense, and the orthodox are wrong to be scandalised. It must be remarked, too, that the only two really sensual passages in the work (ch. 1, vv. 2–4; ch. 7, vv. 2–10) aim at presenting the harem and the manners of Solomon's court in an odious light, and serve to produce a sort of contrast. The thought of the book, as that of all the Hebrew books, is healthy; and if the execution is sometimes wanting in shade and distinction, it is because those qualities are fruits of our refinement and nowise those of the Semitic spirit in general. For my part, I find the *Song of Songs*, understood in its natural sense, far more sacred than many books with which people are less embarrassed, — the book of Esther, for example, from which God is so absent (it is the only book in the Bible where the name of God is not pronounced). I venture even to say that the *Song of Songs* is very important for the honour of the Jewish people, in this sense, that it shows in the Hebrew spirit, qualities which otherwise we should not have suspected. At the sight of that terrible tension, of that fierceness of character which produced the ardent passion of a David, and the fanaticism of the prophets, we might be tempted to believe that there was no place in the heart of such a people

for any sentiment of kindness and tenderness. The *Song of Songs* proves that if the great struggle in which Israel was engaged extinguished, after a certain epoch, the purely human part of its development, this part of the Hebrew character had in its time produced its flower. Israel become the People of God must not cause us to forget the young Israel of the times of the patriarchs, Israel the Arab tribe, whose spirit still continued above all in the Northern Kingdom, in the bosom of which a whole secular life freely expanded; and was eclipsed in the end by the incomparable brilliance of the religious vocation.

"In the point of view of an enlightened philosophy, it was then an error to believe that the *Song of Songs* in order not to be a scandalous book should become a mystic book. But the consciousness of humanity is never altogether mistaken. Such is the force of the religious sentiment that it can give beauty and charm to even a false interpretation. The mystic sense is false philologically, religiously it is true; it corresponds to that great sanctification of love which Christianity has inaugurated. The Shulamite has taken the Christian veil; beneath that veil she is still fair. Why, indeed, should we regret the garland of poetic fiction with which the Christian imagination has adorned the object of its favorite dreams, when we remember that without this network of pious mistakes, the mystic souls would not have had their sacred book? How many pure loves have lived on that beautiful 'Vulnerasti cor meum' which the Church sings at her feasts! Those litanies of the Virgin, and those hymns composed entirely of melancholy or ardent images borrowed from the sacred idyll, how many tears have they caused to flow! Let us add that the Christian interpretation has given to the *Song of Songs* that which it wanted in the original, transparence and delicacy. The Christian Shulamite is more distinguished than the olden maiden of the tribe of Issachar; the delicacy of sentiment in the new races has corrected a slight dullness and heaviness in the Hebrew genius.

"On the warp of the ancient *Song of Songs* has been woven a book entirely different from that of the Hebrews, yet infinitely curious, and, after its manner, sacred. In philology the letter alone must be considered; but in the development of humanity it is the spirit that gives life. Because she is the fruit of moral conceptions far remote from those of ancient Israel, the mystic spouse whom Christian ascetics have abstracted from their visions ought not to be banished from the number of consecrated images. But, because she happens to be a stranger to the theological subtleties of her Christian sister, the poor shepherdess who preferred him whom she loved to Solomon must not either be disdained. None of her contemporaries in the immoral, though more civilized, world of the Chamite or Cushite races had done what she had done; no maiden of Memphis or Babylon, a thousand years before Christ, had resisted a King, or preferred a cottage to a seraglio. The Shulamite was a saint in her time. She marks the first appearance of the virtue of love, the moment when, still sensual, the profound instinct which God has hidden in the breast of human nature reaches, in the proud and free consciousness of a young Jewish maiden, the higher sphere of morality. Do not criticise every word of the ingenuous peasant girl according to the rules of our modern proprieties; do not require from her the refinements of a Saint Theresa. She is a simple maiden of artless antiquity. Although the shaft of the seraph's flame has not pierced her heart, she knows that 'love is stronger than death,' she has felt the 'flaming arrows of Jehovah.'

"I am not among those who look upon love as the most elevated of the principles of human morality, and who would believe that man is only great when he obeys his passions. Duty and reason make the nobility of man; he is only really great when he sacrifices his impulses to a desired and disinterested end. Still less am I among those who esteem the egoistic and unpoetic love of the East and South, which has never inspired a high

thought, and has contributed nothing to ameliorate humanity. But the profound emotion which plays so essential a part in the history of moral progress must not be confounded with the inferior enjoyment which is only a remnant of that sensuality which civilisation has conquered. After duty, love, such as the great races have made it, has been the principal motive power of human elevation, the most powerful lever for raising mankind towards a more perfect ideal. We must not put it in the first rank of the gods, but neither must we bring down to the level of earthly things that feeling thanks to which a ray has shone on the brows most dull with egoism, a bright illusion crossed the most mournful lives, a fugitive moment of poetry raised from their degradation the most vulgar natures. Love augments or diminishes according as the noble elements in humanity rise or sink. In degraded epochs love is not even possible; and, without doubt, if our own age had preserved the strength of the passions, it would not have been so easily reduced to the base pursuit of riches without respect and honour without glory. In the midst of the trade preoccupations which have always been the share of the greatest number, a place would still remain for great ambitions and bold enterprises. A secondary principle of nobility, but the most efficacious for those to whom duty is too abstract, there is nothing above love but the incomparable brilliance of virtue and of genius. The book, then, which ten centuries before Christ shows it to us, not yet distinguished and delicate, but trim and strong, is in a sense a sacred book. Let us place it boldly in the archives where the sacred things are kept; let us leave the theologian to believe that in order to save the honour of the old *Song of Songs* it is necessary to travesty it; and to those who would defend that antiquated interpretation by reasons of propriety, let us recall what Niebuhr replied to a young pastor who was troubled by the necessity of admitting into the sacred canon a song of love: — 'For my part,' said the illustrious historian with animation, 'I should judge that something was

wanting to the Bible if I found no expression there for the strongest and most profound of all human emotions.' "

Dec. 1878
Sparkes Creek
Scone, N. S. W.

THE SONG OF SONGS[1]

Dramatis Personae

The Shulamite, *a young girl of the village of Shulem in the tribe of Issachar.*
Shepherd, *lover of the Shulamite.*
King Solomon.
Brothers of the Shulamite.
Women of Solomon's Harem.
Women of Jerusalem.
Citizens of Jerusalem.
People of Solomon's Retinue. } *These are mute.*
Paranymphs of the Shepherd. }
The Chorus.
Sage, *who speaks the moral.*

ACT I

The scene is supposed to represent Solomon in the midst of his seraglio.

Scene 1

A Woman of the Harem. Let him kiss me with a kiss of his mouth! . . . .

[1] "The *Song of Songs* which is Solomon's." This title is posterior to the composition of the poem, and is obviously erroneous in attributing its authorship to Solomon.

THE WOMEN OF THE HAREM, *in chorus.* Thy caresses are sweeter than wine, when they mingle with the odour of thy exquisite perfumes; thy name is as oil poured out; and therefore the maidens love thee.

THE SHULAMITE, *brought in by force, and addressing her absent lover.* Draw me after thee; let us run together. The King has made me enter his harem.

THE WOMEN OF THE HAREM, *to Solomon.* Our transports and our joys are for thee alone! How right is it to love thee!

THE SHULAMITE. I am black but I am beautiful, O daughters of Jerusalem, as the tents of Kedar, as the standards of Solomon. Do not scorn me because I am a little black: it is because the sun has burnt me. My mother's children hated me; they put me in the fields to keep the vines. Alas! my own vineyard I have ill kept.[1]

SCENE 2

THE SHULAMITE, *musing.* Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, whither thou leadest thy flock, where thou makest them to rest at noon, that I may not wander like one astray among the flocks of thy companions.

A WOMAN OF THE HAREM. If thou knowest not, O thou fairest among women, go forth in the footsteps of thy flock and feed thy goats by the shepherds' huts.

SOLOMON. To my mare when she is yoked to the chariot which Pharaoh sent me[2] have I compared thee, O my love. Thy cheeks are adorned with rows of pearls, thy neck with chains of coral. We will make thee necklaces of gold studded with silver.

[1] That is to say, her honour. She alludes to the surprise of which she has been the victim. (See Act V, Sc. 2.)

[2] A chariot which Solomon procured from Egypt, the horses of which were covered with ornaments like necklaces.

Scene 3

The Shulamite, *alone.* While the King is at his divan the spikenard which perfumeth me [1] sendeth forth its odour. My beloved is unto me a cluster of myrrh; he shall lie between my breasts. My beloved is unto me a bunch of camphor from the vineyard of Engaddi.

Solomon enters

Solomon. Yea, thou art fair, my love! yea, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes.

The Shulamite, *addressing her absent lover.* Yea, thou art fair, my beloved! yea, thou art lovely! Our bed is a bed of grass.[2]

Solomon. The beams of our palace are of cedar, the panelling of cypress-wood.

The Shulamite, *singing.*[3]

I am the lily of Sharon,
The Narcissus of the valleys! . . . .

The Shepherd, *entering abruptly.* As a lily among thorns, so is my love among the maidens.

The Shulamite. As an apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the youths. I have long desired to sit under his shadow, and his fruit is sweet to my palate.

The lovers embrace

The Shulamite. He has brought me into the cellar; and his banner over me is love.[4] (*To the chorus.*) Sustain me with grapes, strengthen with fruits, for I die of love. . . .

[1] That is to say, her lover, the thought of whom is as a perfume to her.

[2] She goes back in thought to the time when she was in the village.

[3] The Shulamite sings this complete, which probably made part of a popular song, to reassure her lover in regard to her fidelity, and to reveal her presence. (See Act II, Scene 2.)

[4] A flag was raised over the cellars where wine was distributed.

She falls overcome in the arms of her lover, and murmurs
His left hand is under my hand, and his right hand embraces me.

THE SHEPHERD, *to the chorus.*[1] I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the hinds of the field, that ye wake not, that ye wake not my beloved till she please.

ACT II

SCENE I

THE SHULAMITE, *alone and speaking as in a vision.* The voice of my beloved! Behold he cometh bounding upon the mountains, leaping upon the hills. My beloved is like a roe or a fawn. Behold he standeth behind the wall, he looketh through the window, he watcheth through the trellis. He saith to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come. For the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing is come. The voice of the turtle dove is heard in our fields; the young shoots of the fig-tree grow red; the flowering vines breathe out their perfume. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come. My dove, nestled in the clefts of the stone, hidden at the top of the rock; let me see thy face, let me hear thy voice; for thy voice is sweet, and thy face is lovely." (*She sings.*)

> Let us take the foxes, the little foxes,
> That lay waste the vines;
> For our vine is in blossom.[2]

My beloved is mine, and I am his . . . my beloved who feeds his flock among the lilies. . . .[3] When the heat falls away and

[1] The rôle of the chorus, as in the Greek drama, is at once individual and collective.

[2] She sings a song of spring which will cause her lover to recognize her. (Cf. above, Act I, Sc. 3.)

[3] The fields of Sharon are, at certain seasons of the year, full of lilies.

the shadows bend, return, my beloved, and be like a roe or a fawn upon the ravined mountains.

Scene 2

The Shulamite. On my couch during the night I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him, but I found him not. "Let us arise now," I said to myself, "let us go round the city, let us walk through the markets and the squares, let us seek him whom my soul loveth." I sought him and found him not. . . . The watchmen who go about the city met me: "Have you seen," I said to them, "him whom my soul loveth?" Scarcely had I passed them, than I found him whom my soul loveth; I seized him and would not let him go till I had brought him into the house of my mother, into the chamber of her who gave me birth.

The lovers embrace; the shepherdess sinks in her lover's arms.

The Shepherd, *to the Chorus.* I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the hinds of the fields that ye wake not, that ye wake not my beloved till she please.

ACT III

Scene 1

The scene is in the streets of Jerusalem.
Chorus of Men, *composed of inhabitants of Jerusalem.*
(*The cortege of Solomon seen in the distance.*)

Who is this that ariseth out of the wilderness[1] like a pillar of smoke, exhaling the fragrance of myrrh, of frankincense, and of all the powders of the perfumer?

[1] That is to say "who appears at the horizon," Jerusalem being surrounded by a girdle of deserts.

The cortege passes by.

First Citizen. Behold the palanquin of Solomon. Three score valiant men are about it, of the valiant men of Israel; they all bear swords and are expert in war; each of them has his sword upon his thigh, to scatter the terrors of the night.

Second Citizen. King Solomon has made himself a litter of the wood of Lebanon. The pillars thereof are of silver; the balusters of gold; the seat of purple. In the midst shines a fair one among the daughters of Jerusalem.

Chorus of Men, *addressing the women who are supposed to be within their houses.* Go forth, O ye daughters of Sion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him on the day of his espousals,[1] the day of the gladness of his heart.

Scene 2

The scene passes in the harem.

Solomon. Yea, thou art fair, my love! yea, thou art fair! Thine eyes are doves' eyes beneath the folds of thy veil. Thy hair is as a flock of goats on the sides of Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep that come up from the washing; each of them bears twins, none of them are barren. Thy lips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy mouth is lovely. Thy cheek is like a piece of pomegranate beneath the folds of thy veil. Thy neck is like the tower of David[2] built for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand breastplates, and all the bucklers of the mighty. Thy two breasts are like twin gazelles, which feed among the lilies. When the day shall grow fresh, and the shadows bend, I will go towards the mountain of myrrh, towards the hill of frankincense.

[1] Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, always preserved considerable authority over him.

[2] Because of the necklaces round it, which make it resemble a tower hung round with armour.

SCENE 3

Evening.

SOLOMON. Thou art all fair, my love, there is no blemish in thee.

THE SHEPHERD. *Supposed to be at the foot of the tower of the seraglio.* To me, to me, my bride! Come to me from Lebanon;[1] look at me from the top of Amana, from the summit of Shenir and Hermon, from the depths of the lions' den, from the heights of the mountains where the leopards dwell.

She looks on him. Thou hast given me courage, my betrothed sister, with one of thine eyes, with one of the rings that float upon thy neck. How delightful is thy love, my betrothed sister! How sweet are thy caresses! They are better than wine, and the odour of thy perfumes than all balsams. Thy lips drop honey, my bride; honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the fragrance of thy garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon. An inclosed garden is my betrothed sister, a spring shut up, a sealed fountain;[2] an orchard where the pomegranate is mingled with the sweet fruits; the camphor with the spikenard; the spikenard, the saffron; the calamus, the cinnamon with all sorts of odoriferous trees; the myrrh and the aloes with all sorts of scented plants; a fountain in a garden, a well of living water, a stream that flows from Lebanon. Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden that the perfumes thereof may be spread abroad.

THE SHULAMITE. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

He kisses her.

THE SHEPHERD. I am come into my garden, O my betrothed sister. I have gathered my myrrh and my spice; I have

[1] Lebanon, and the images which follow, represent, in ambiguous language, the inaccessible heights of the palace and the dangers which his love's innocence ran there.

[2] He is reassuring himself in regard to her fidelity.

eaten my sugar and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk. (*To the Chorus.*) Eat, my comrades, drink; yea, my friends, make yourselves drunken.

ACT IV

Scene I

The Shulamite, *alone.* I sleep, but my heart waketh. . . . It is the voice of my beloved.[1] He knocketh: "Open to me," he saith, "my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is covered with dew, the locks of my hair are wet with the mists of night." — "I have taken off my tunic; why should I put it on? I have washed my feet; why should I soil them?" Then my beloved has stretched his hand through the window, and my bosom yearned towards him. I rise up to open to my beloved; and behold my hands drop with myrrh,[2] my fingers with liquid myrrh that covered the handle of the bolt.[3] I open to my beloved, but my beloved had disappeared, he had fled.[4] The sound of his voice had taken away my reason. I went out, I sought him, but I could not find him: I called him but he gave me no answer. The watchmen who go about the city met me;

[1] In all that follows the vision of the beloved is identified with the beloved himself by a poetic figure of speech very common among Arab poets, and called Thaïf al-khaiâl.

[2] The shepherd, by another sportive caprice, responds to that of the Shulamite.

[3] "At lacrumans exclusus amator limine sæpe
Floribus et sertis operit, posteisque superbos
Unguit amaracino. (Lucretius IV, 1173–75.)

[4] Prof. Roberston Smith (*Engl. Brit.* "Canticles.") finds in this passage (ch. 5, vv. 2–8) a second dream, "more weird and melancholy and constructed with that singular psychological felicity which characterizes the dreams of the Old Testament." It should be observed that this interpretation seems not to account for the subsequent portion of the chapter which is obviously connected with the foregoing passage. (Note by tr.)

they struck me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my mantle from me. (*To the chorus of women.*) I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my lover, tell him that I die of love.

THE CHORUS OF WOMEN. What, then, is thy lover more than another, O thou fairest among women, what, then, is thy lover more than another, that thou dost so charge us?

THE SHULAMITE. My lover is white and ruddy; he may be known among thousands. His head is as pure gold; the locks of his hair are flexible as palms, and black as a raven. His eyes are doves on the streams of running water, doves who bathe in milk, perched on the edge of a full vessel. His cheeks are as a bed of balm, as a border of sweet flowers; his lips are lilies, myrrh flows from them. His hands are gold rings, enamelled with stones of Tarshish; his loins are a masterpiece of ivory covered with sapphires; his legs are columns of marble on bases of gold; his aspect is like Lebanon, beautiful as the cedars. Sweetness is shed from his palate, yea, loveliness from all his person. Such is my beloved, such is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

THE CHORUS. Whither is thy lover gone, O thou fairest among women, whither is he turned aside that we may seek him with thee?

The lovers find each other.

THE SHULAMITE. My love has come down into his garden; he has come towards the bed of balm, to feed his flock in the gardens and to gather the lilies. I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine . . . my beloved who feeds his flock in the midst of the lilies.

ACT V

Scene 1

The Scene passes in the Harem.

Solomon. Thou art fair, my love, as Tirzah,[1] lovely as Jerusalem, but terrible as an army in battle.[2] Turn away thine eyes from me, for they trouble me. Thy hair is as a flock of goats on the sides of Gilead. Thy teeth are like a flock of shorn sheep that come up from the washing; each of them bears twins, none of them are barren. Thy cheek is like a piece of pomegranate, beneath the folds of thy veil. . . .

The Shepherd, *outside*. There are threescore queens, fourscore concubines, and young girls without number. By my dove, my undefiled is the unique one. She is the only one of her mother, the favourite of her that gave her birth. The young girls have seen her, and have called her happy; the queens and the concubines have seen her, and have praised her.

Scene 2

The Chorus. Who is this whose glance is like the dawn, fair as the moon, pure as the sun, but terrible as an army in battle? [3]

The Shulamite, *aside, and turning her back to the ladies of the harem*. I went down to the garden of nuts to see the shrubs of the valley, to see if the vine had budded, if the pomegranates were in flower. Imprudent that I was! behold my caprice has thrown me among the chariots of a prince's retinue.[4]

[1] A town in the north of Palestine, which, from Jeroboam to Omri, was the capital of the Kingdom of Israel.

[2] The Shulamite, faithful to her lover, only replies by proud looks to Solomon's caresses.

[3] The chorus is astonished at the peasant girl's pride.

[4] She is narrating the way in which she had been surprised during a morning walk by some of Solomon's people.

THE WOMEN OF THE HAREM. We pray thee, we pray thee, O Shulamite,[1] we pray thee, turn that we may see thee.

A DANCER OF THE HAREM. Why look at the Shulamite rather than at a dancer of Mahanaim? [2]

She dances.

SOLOMON. How beautiful are thy feet in thy sandals, O prince's daughter! The curve of thy flanks is like that of a necklace, the work of a skilful hand. Thy navel is a round goblet full of aromatic wine; thy body is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies. Thy two breasts are like the twins of a gazelle. Thy neck is like a tower of ivory; thine eyes are the fishpools of Heshbon [3] by the gate of Bethrabbin; [4] thy nose is straight and proud as the tower of Lebanon [5] which looketh towards Damascus. Thy head resembles Carmel; thy hair is as threads of purple; a king is enchained by the tresses thereof. How beautiful thou art, how delightful thou art, my love, in the hours of pleasure! Thy stature is as a palm, and thy breasts as its clusters. I said: I will go up to the palm; I will gather its boughs. Let thy breasts be to me as the clusters of the vine; thy breath as the fragrance of the apple-tree; thy mouth as an exquisite wine which flows sweetly and moistens the lips of the tranced lover.

[1] That is to say, an inhabitant of Shulem or Shunem, a town of the tribe of Isaachor. Abishag, the "fair damsel" we read of in 1 Kings, ch. 1, who also was carried away from her native village, was a Shunnamite.

[2] The dancer seems jealous of the effect that the peasant girl's beauty produces, and seeks to draw the attention of the seraglio upon herself. Mahanaim was an ancient town celebrated for its dancing girls, and for the licentious rites practised there.

[3] Heshbon means *meditation*. These waters are always untroubled, free from mud, and not stirred by the wind.

[4] Bethrabbin, *daughter of the mob*, one of the gates of Heshbon.

[5] One of the towns built by David in the north of Palestine as a post of observation against the Syrians. (2 Sam., ch. 8, v. 6.)

THE SHULAMITE, *persisting in her isolation.* I am my beloved's; and he also, towards me is his desire.

SCENE 3

THE SHULAMITE, *running towards her lover.* Come, my beloved, let us go forth into the fields, let us lie down in the village. Let us rise early and run to the vines; let us see if the shoots have budded, if the blossoms are open, if the pomegranates are in flower. There will I give thee my caresses. The love-apple[1] gives forth its perfume; the fairest fruits fall at our door: new and old I have kept them for thee, my beloved. Oh! that thou wert my brother! that thou hadst sucked the breasts of my mother, so that when I met thee without I might embrace thee without their scorn. I will lead thee and introduce thee to my mother's house; there thou wilt teach me everything, and I will give thee to drink of my aromatic wine, the juice of my pomegranates.[2]

She sinks in his arms and murmurs

His left hand is under my head and his right hand embraces me.

THE SHEPHERD, *to the chorus.* I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye wake not, that ye wake not my beloved till she please.

SCENE 4

The journey from Jerusalem to the village is considered to be effected.

THE CHORUS, *at the sight of the sleeping Shulamite carried*

[1] The mandrake or belladonna, to which popular opinion attributes occult virtues.

[2] Prof. Robertson Smith considers that this monologue "in which the hope of immediate return is tempered by maidenly shame and a maiden's desire for her mother's counsel is of special value for a right appreciation of the psychology of the love which the poem celebrates." (*Enc. Brit.* "Canticles.") [Note by tr.]

by her lover. Who is this that cometh up from the desert leaning upon her beloved? [1]

The lovers arrive at the village.

THE SHEPHERD, *placing the Shulamite under the apple-tree of the maternal house and waking her.* I waken thee under the apple-tree. *(Showing her the house.)* Behold the place where thy mother brought thee into the world, where thy mother gave thee birth.

THE SHULAMITE. Set me now as a seal upon thine heart, as a ring upon thine arm; for love is strong as death; passion inflexible as hell.[2] The brands thereof are brands of flame, flaming arrows of Jehovah.

SAGE, *coming forward to give the conclusion of the poem.* Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it. When a man would buy love with riches he only gathers confusion.

EPILOGUE

The scene passes at Shulem in a garden pavillion.

ONE OF THE SHULAMITE'S BROTHERS. *(They are ignorant of her abduction and return.)* We have a little sister who hath yet no breasts. What shall we do with our sister in the day that she is sought for?

ANOTHER BROTHER. If she be a wall [3] let us make her battlements of silver; if she be a door [4] let us make her panels of cedar.[5]

THE SHULAMITE, *entering abruptly.* I have been a wall; my breasts have been towers; [6] that is how I have obtained that

[1] That is to say, who appears at the horizon. (See Act III, Sc. 1.)
[2] That never gives up its prey.
[3] If her virtue is impregnable.
[4] If her virtue is less severe.
[5] They are expressing in ambiguous terms their intention to sell their sister to a harem.
[6] That is to say, my virtue has resisted every proof.

he[1] should leave me in peace. Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-hamon; [2] he let it out to husbandmen each of whom should pay a thousand shekels for rent. Behold my vineyard is before me.[3] A thousand shekels for thee, O Solomon, and two hundred shekels for the husbandmen of the vine.[4]

THE SHEPHERD, *outside the pavillion where he is waiting with his paranymphs.* Fair one who inhabitest this garden, the companions are united and listening, let me hear thy voice.

THE SHULAMITE. Make haste, my beloved, and be like a roe or a fawn on the fragrant mountains.

[1] Solomon.
[2] A place in the north of Palestine.
[3] That is to say, I alone knew how to take care of my wine.
[4] Irony against Solomon, and against her brothers who have guarded her so ill.

AN OPEN LETTER TO BIOGRAPHERS[1]

Dear Sirs:

During recent years I have spent many silent hours in your company. These hours have passed more or less pleasantly. It is because I can only look back upon them with mingled satisfaction that I venture to address you now.

Let me explain, in the first place, that I sought your society as a student of that rare and marvellous human variation which we vaguely call "genius"; I desire to collect, so far as this may be possible, the material which will enable me to state some fairly definite conclusions concerning the complex nature and causes of genius. You will observe that I may thus be described as your ideal reader. I come to you, not to pass away my idle moments, nor because I look up to this religious leader or follow that politician or am the devotee of any musician or painter or poet; I come to you with the challenge to produce your finest revelation concerning a certain unique personality in whatsoever manner that personality may have been manifested. For you all profess that you are striving to set forth such unique personalities, and I have sought from you in vain the greatest revelation of all, "The Life of an Average Man." You undertake to tell me of these unique lives, and with my head full of questions I take up my pencil to note down or underline your answers. — I have often flung away that idle superfluous pencil.

[1] This must have been written about twenty-five years ago, as a result of the biographical research conducted by Ellis for his *Study of British Genius*, 1904.

This is why I venture to approach you collectively now. I have long listened to you in respectful silence. The years have rendered my respect somewhat critical, and I trust you will pardon the remarks with which I now break my silence.

You do not, I have said, tell me a fair portion of the things I desire to know. That fact I shall try to drive home later. I wish first to point out that you do tell me a great many things that I have no desire to know. You will tell me the lives of the men your hero knew; you will tell me his common-place remarks concerning the common-place people he met, and the towns he sojourned in; you are seldom tired of telling me in fullest detail of the honours that were showered on his declining years. But all this is not *biography*. And there is a more subtle error of commission into which you frequently fall head-long. You assume the function of the historian. Now a biographer is not a historian. It is quite true that men make history. But we cannot study the individual man in the same way as we study the product of many men's activity. The method which is best fitted for investigating the Reformation is not best fitted for studying Luther's portrait; the adequate biographer of Laud will scarcely be the adequate historian of the English Revolution. The better equipped a writer may be for the one task, the more badly equipped he will be for the other. The whole tone and touch must be different, and much practice in the one medium will no more give skill in the other than practice on the organ will make a man an accomplished pianist. But it is by practice on the organ of history that the most conspicuous among you have usually come to the piano of biography. And you often forget that you are not at the organ still. Some of you are now engaged on the Dictionary of National Biography. It is a useful and fascinating task; when complete there will be no such delightful work of its size in the language. But in any volume of it, I can turn from " biography " to " biography " which con-

tains not one line of genuine biography to the page; instead you have given us slices of mis-placed history. Clearly you have seldom asked yourselves: *WHAT IS BIOGRAPHY?* You have simply assumed that it is the part a man plays in the history of civilization. But that is to stultify both biography and history. In history we can never see truly from the stand-point of a single actor, and biography is thus made mere bad history. Undoubtedly any great man bears with him the *matériaux pour servir* in the making of the history of civilization, — whether in his deeds or his discoveries or his art-products — but the cataloguing of these is something beside the purpose of biography, just as the description of the face of the earth is beside the astronomer's purpose, however intimately the earth may hang to the sun. True, it is not impossible to trace the life and soul of an artist in his work. But this is only done by a special keen precision of touch such as Leynardi has expended on the dissection of the *Divina Commedia,* and not by the methods of the commentator who tells me all about every person or place Dante has mentioned for no better reason than because Dante has mentioned it. To write history, whether of a nation or of civilization, is to write a complex whole in which the products of many men's activities have fermented together to yield something which is as far from the minds and lives of the men who made it as Christianity is from the mind and life of Jesus. To describe the products of a single man's activity, whenever it is worth doing at all, is to write prolegomena to history. To describe the birth and growth of a great man as he was in his real nature, physical and psychical — as a grape-cluster on the tree of life and not as a drop of alcohol in the vat of civilization — that is biography.

I have it against you, then, that you who are charged with this high task are perpetually seeking to merge it in a lower or at all events a different task. But I would content myself if after all, you really enabled me to gain a picture of the man.

I would gird up my loins, fling to right and to left the extraneous matter that you pile up around me and make straight for the vital facts. But they are not there! Many and many a voluminous so-called "biography" I can compress into a couple of pages, and likely enough even these pages will reveal less than the vivid laconic portraits that Carlyle set down as by lightning flash of the men he but passingly met. Thus the authorised and only life of Young, not published until many years after his death, so far as really salient and pregnant facts are concerned can be compressed into six lines; the one supremely illuminative fact in it is the reproduction of his portrait. Now here is one of the most brilliant and versatile heroes of science that this country ever produced, a man who ranks with Harvey and Newton and Darwin, and the best that you can do is to lose to us for ever the chance of knowing the manner of man that he was in body and spirit: there remains only the image of the beautiful child-like face, with the sweet mouth and the large eager eyes, as Lawrence painted it. In every man of genius a new strange force is brought into the world. The biographer is the biologist of this new life. I come to you to learn the origins of this tremendous energy, the forces that gave it impetus and that drove it into one channel rather than into another. I will gladly recognise that now-a-days you generally tell me of the hero's ancestors; formerly you told me nothing of the mothers of great men, seldom even the name, and that is one of the most hopeless *lacunae* in the right understanding of genius. How gladly would I know more definitely the race and nature of the mother of that saint who for so many centuries won the love of Englishmen and whose shrine is furrowed deep by the knees of Chaucer's pilgrims! And yet while race and family are certainly an enormous factor in the making of every man, I would wish to point out to you that they are not omnipotent — for then the hero's brothers and sisters would always be heroes too

— so that you need not trouble yourselves or us with the trivial details of the lives of these ancestors. But it would be well if you could tell us something of the stars that shone in the making of the individual life. We desire to know the influences physical and moral, which surrounded the period of his conception, the welfare of his pre-natal life, whether he was born naturally and in due season. All the facts were once known in the area of the hero's family circle; some at least among you could have told them to us and so have made many things plain which now remain obscure. Rarely indeed have you done so, rarely even have you recognised that such questions are a part of knowledge. Yet the fate of all of us is in large measure sealed at the moment we leave the womb. Next in importance comes the curve of life that has its summit at puberty and ends with the completion of adolescence; whatever else there is to make is made then. The machine has been created; during these years it is wound up to perform its work in the world. What follows after counts for something but always for less. You cannot tell us too much real biography — the description of life — concerning these youthful years. Even the detailed account of the games and amusements devised by the young hero, such as Nietzsche's sister and biographer has written down for us, are welcome when obtainable; for the after-life of the man is often little more than the same games played more tragically on a larger field. After the age of twenty your task becomes easier and more obvious; after thirty, if so far you have fulfilled that task, what is there further left to tell? The rest is but the liberation of a mighty spring, the slow running down of energy. The man recedes to give place to his deeds, whether such deeds be the assault of great fortresses or the escalade of mighty sentences. There is the same heroic effort and achievement, whether on the walls of Jerusalem when Godfrey scaled them or on Flaubert's sofa at Rouen.

But, as I have already tried to point out, mere chatter about the deeds is not what we come for to you the biographers. If the deeds are real they will speak for themselves in history or verse or other shape that men will not let die. When I want to see Velasquez's pictures I go not to you but to Madrid. But if you could only tell me how he came to paint them! When you are dealing with the adult hero in the midst of his work the one great service you can do, and that which is your most proper function, is to tell us, not about this work, but about the conditions under which it was achieved. If you have so far done your task we know the nature of the force; now we need to know by what channels it was manifested. I have it against you here that — save incidentally, partially, often hypocritically — you seldom attempt this part of your task. You find it so much easier to ramble on about the work and its reception than to describe the man's method of doing it, and what hindered or helped him in the doing. Often enough you like to represent him as doing it in a coat of mail impervious to the shafts of human weaknesses. You are well content when you have taken some real man — let us say, old Abraham Lincoln, a real man if ever there was one — and in the course of a ponderous authorised biography bleached and starched and ironed him into a tailor's dummy. You seem to me like the proverbial valet for whom his master is no hero. The hero on the battle-field may be a coward to his dentist; the man who has faced a revolution of socialistic thought may be too timid to walk down Lisson Grove.[1] These things do not attenuate heroism; they are part of it. You cannot have force in two places at the same time; and you must know a man's weakness before you truly know his strength. It is often in the "weaknesses" — as the valet-moralist counts weakness — that the source of the hero's strength lies, the weakness which as Hinton used to put it was the path of

[1] I had a real man in mind — a distinguished thinker.

least resistance through which the aboriginal energy of Nature passed into the man. The recital of the weaknesses in detail you can spare if you see good reason — and there is good reason why a biography should not be a *chronique scandaleuse* — but if you refuse to note them you are false to any intelligible conception of a biographer's function, and you have produced a lie which is as immoral as every untrue picture of life necessarily is. Michael Angelo's Platonic affection for men went to the chiseling of his sculpture, Victor Hugo's hollow domestic life was not unconnected with his ideals of celestial purity, literature is full of the unavowed confessions of opium-eaters and wine-bibbers, and so all along. It corrupts the tree of life at the core to deny such associations, to point only to the leaves and flowers that men call "moral," to ignore the roots which — through your hypocrisy, it may well be — they call dirty and "immoral." Nothing shall induce you to admit that your Achilles had a vulnerable heel? — And yet, if you rightly consider the matter, without that heel Achilles would have been no hero at all.

I have referred once or twice to the "biographer's function." Sometimes I wonder how many of you have ever considered what a biographer's function is. With what equipment have you usually come to your task? Even the question I feel you may regard as an insult. Yet, consider. The novelist only attains skill in his work after failure, perhaps a long series of failures like Balzac or Zola, rarely indeed at a bound. The novelists whose force has developed in a night have perished in a night. In the matter of biographies we possess what we should possess in the matter of novels if few novelists produced more than the early bungles of their prentice hands. And yet a novelist has undertaken the incomparably easier task of recording the lives of the simple puppets of his own brain. Remember, again, that biography does not stand alone as a branch of

research. Beside biography, the life of an individual, we have ethnography, the life of a community. To the making of a great ethnographer, — an Adolf Bastian, let us say, — there are needed preliminary training in biology and psychology, an immense knowledge of literature, laborious research during journeys among remote savage people, perpetual attention to petty details. But should a biographer willingly admit that the life of a community is better worth serious study than the life of its greatest man? Go to the British Museum or the Anthropological Institute and look at those admirable series of photographs in which Mr. Portman has reproduced every step in the processes of life among the Andamanese, for instance in the fashioning of a bow and arrow; or see, if you can, the delightful photographs in which Mr. Im Thurn has caught the beautiful brown-skinned Indians of Guiana in every stage of their work and especially their play. Is not the fashioning of a lyric to pierce the hearts of men for ever as well worth study as the making of an arrow? The child of genius gathering shells on the shores of eternity as interesting as the games of savages? Yet few have thought it worth while to inquire how Burns achieved his songs or Newton his theories. It was enough to utter the blessed word "Inspiration!" and lean comfortably back. Not so have the physiologists solved the mystery of physical respiration.

Biography, then, is strictly analogous to ethnography, the one being the picture of the life of a race, the other the intimate picture of the life of a man. Now both the one and the other are branches of applied psychology, a strict method of scientific research. There was a time not so long ago when psychology was not a strict method of research and when any arm-chair philosopher sat down to write the history of the general soul as light-heartedly as the biographer still sits down to write the history of the individual soul. So far as pure psychology at least is concerned, those days are past. With the establishment by

Wundt some twenty years ago of the first psychological laboratory, psychology for the first time became a science; and in Germany and the United States — the two countries to which we now look for light on this new science — the work of men like Münsterberg, Preyer, Stanley Hall, Jastrow and Scripture has taught us how to obtain by exact methods a true insight into the processes of the average human mind. No man now ventures to call himself a psychologist unless he is familiar with the methods and results of these workers. A few psychologists in Italy and France have pushed such methods into the investigation of exceptional men, and like Ottolenghi have examined the visual field of certain complacent men of genius, or like Binet have traced out with remarkably interesting results the ways in which certain dramatists — Dumas, Goncourt, Sardou, Meilhac and especially De Curel — conceive and write their plays. But how often does any such attempt, on however imperfect material, to bring us near to the heart and brain of a great creative personality form part of what the biographer presumes to call "Life"? How many biographers so much as know that they are — may the real students forgive me! — psychologists, and that the rules of their art have in large part been laid down?

I am quite sure, my dear sirs, that you will instinctively feel that this is stuff and nonsense. You have your duty to the public who pay you handsomely for doing it speedily, for the public has an uneasy feeling that the great man's fame will turn sour if not consumed off-hand. And then you have your duty towards your hero's personal friends and relations who will only help you on condition that you produce a figure that is smooth, decorous, conventional, *bien coiffé*, above all, closely cut off below the bust, such a figure as we may all gaze at without a blush in the hairdresser's window. And at bottom, you may admit at last, you distrust both yourself and your audience, and will not publicly dare to take any bull by the horns.

Well, there is no doubt truth in this; I must needs believe

there is, since you so solemnly and constantly repeat it between the lines of your books. Yet, after all, there are a few men whose fame has not died in a night, and who remain alive after their friends and relations have turned to dust. It is in the case of such men that I question the wisdom of sacrificing the interests of the world to the interests of a fleeting generation. Is it not worth while to wait five years, or even fifty years, or for the matter of that five hundred years, and at the end to possess the everlastingly inspiring record of a master spirit? Is it not worth while to be accounted a fool for a century, like the man who wrote according to his means the best of biographies, and to become immortal at last? It is the man who is a valet at soul who shudders at the possibility of possessing Boswell's Life of Jesus, or Eckermann's Conversations with Homer or Froude's edition of Shakespeare's Reminiscences and who creates an atmosphere which renders such achievements immensely difficult. At the same time this atmosphere renders possible a kind of hero so rare in the world, the Hero as Biographer.

That is the final point on which I bring this letter to a conclusion. The writing of a biography is no facile task; it is the strenuous achievement of a life-time, only to be accomplished in the face of endless obstacles and unspeakable prejudice. I beg you to consider it. Then the ideal reader of coming centuries will not sigh so wearily as I sigh when he hears that Mr. So-and-So is being engaged on a biography of our eminent poet, novelist, or philosopher, This, That, or The Other; that every endeavour will be made to bring out this biography while the sense of the loss we have sustained is still so strongly felt; and that it is confidently expected that the large first edition will be bought up before publication. — Not so was any great book born into the world.

HAVELOCK ELLIS.

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TRANSLATIONS, INTRODUCTIONS, PREFACES

Ellis's translations include *Germainal*, from the French of Zola, and the folk songs from the Spanish, which appear together with his own youthful Sonnets. His earliest Introduction goes back to 1884, when he aided Mrs. James Hinton in the editing of *The Law-Breaker &*

The Coming of the Law, — a selection of passages from Hinton's Mss. To this period belongs, too, the editing of the *Hymns of Progress* referred to in the text. From 1887, for a short time, he was busied with the *Mermaid Series* (Thomas Middleton, John Ford, Christopher Marlowe); from 1889 the *Contemporary Science Series* was to occupy him for a quarter of a century. (The long and important list of these volumes may be found in the late reprint of Ellis's *The Criminal.*) Ellis's edition of *Heine's Prose Writings* (Scott Library) appeared in 1887; next year came his edition of three plays by Ibsen (Pillars of Society, Ghosts, An Enemy of the People); for the *Scott Library* (later *Camelot*) he did three volumes of Landor's writings; in 1891 he wrote an Introduction to Alexander Winter's *New York State Reformatory at Elmira;* in 1895, he edited Vasari's *Lives of Italian Painters;* in 1908, for Everyman's Library, he edited Lewes's *Life of Goethe.*

Later prefaces and introductions include those to Ellen Key's *Love and Marriage* (1911), *Woman Movement* (1912), *Rahel Varnhagen,* (1913), and to Nyström-Hamilton's *Ellen Key* (1913); to Mrs. Ellis's *James Hinton* (1918), *The New Horizon in Love & Life* (1921), *Stories and Essays* (1924) and *The Mine of Dreams* (1925); to Margaret Sanger's *Woman And The New Race* (1920); to Otto Braun's *Diaries* (1924).

Note: The Bibliography of Havelock Ellis, as imperfectly given above, represents the first stage of a full compilation. The author will be grateful for all corrections, additions and other data, including especially articles in magazines.

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